



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**TAMING THE FRONTIER: A MYTH OF IMPOSSIBILITY**

by

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March 2010

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**TAMING THE FRONTIER: A MYTH OF IMPOSSIBILITY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the establishment of the Durand Line in 1893 as the international border between Afghanistan and British India, the frontier areas on the eastern side of the border have not been integrated into the social fabric or political framework of the government. Conventional wisdom views integrating the tribes of the FATA as extremely difficult, if not impossible. The real reason is that neither the British nor subsequent Pakistani administrations committed the appropriate resources or attention to accomplish the task due to a lack of political will. Geopolitical influences and Islamist militants drove the resistance that deemed the effort to integrate the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, an area void of significant natural resources, not worth the cost. The terrorist organizations that Pakistan supported both covertly and overtly in the frontier areas are now uncontrollable and the very instruments intended to promote the national interests of a nuclear armed yet power deficient state pose an existential threat to the government they were intended to serve. Contemporary rhetoric now supports complete integration of the FATA into the writ of the Pakistani government. The good news for those policy makers who see this as a daunting task is that no government has really tried.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AQ	AL QAEDA
CENTO	CENTRAL TREATY ORGANIZATION
FATA	FEDERALLY ADMINISTERED TRIBAL AREAS
FCR	FRONTIER CRIMES REGULATIONS
ISI	INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE
JI	JAMAT E-ISLAMI
JUI	JAMIAT ULEMA-E-ISLAM
MMA	MUTTAHIDA MAJLIS-E-AMAL
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
NWFP	NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE
PPP	PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY
SEATO	SOUTHEAST ASIA TREATY ORGANIZATION
TTP	TEHRIK-I-TALIBAN PAKISTAN

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION**

The borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been invaded several times and claimed, at least nominally, within the domain of numerous civilizations. Alexander the Great, the Sassanians, the Kushans, Hun rulers, the Arabs, the Turks, the Mughals, Afghan Kings, the Sikhs, and the British all viewed the land encompassing the hilly passes that are the gateway between the Indus River Valley and Central Asia as falling within their empires.<sup>1</sup> Despite any boundaries drawn on a map or mutual understandings between Kings and rulers, “the tribal belt as a whole” has escaped “subjection to any external power – a freedom symbolized by the failure to impose in it any taxation.”<sup>2</sup> Quite the opposite has generally occurred, where mighty empires and powerful armies offered an allowance for security and unopposed travel through the mountain passes instead of facing resistance from the Pashtun tribes. The question I intend to explore is why the land now called the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) has never truly been integrated into the controlled areas of an empire or, more recently, the legal apparatus of the ruling government.

## **B. IMPORTANCE**

The FATA served for centuries as a transit route for countries seeking empire and a staging ground for militants fighting to preserve Pashtun traditions or to defend and promote Islam against foreign threats. The invasion of Afghanistan in response to September 11 forced many Afghan Taliban, Al Qaeda affiliates, and Pakistani Islamists into the FATA and adjacent areas of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) to find a safe haven in which to pursue their neo-fundamentalist goals. The infusion of these

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<sup>1</sup> Naveed Ahmad Shinwari, *Understanding FATA: Attitudes Towards Governance, Religion & Society in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas* (Community Appraisal & Motivation Programme, 2008), 12. Found at [www.understandingfata.org](http://www.understandingfata.org) or [www.camp.org.pk](http://www.camp.org.pk) (accessed September 19, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans* (London, UK: Macmillan Company Ltd., 1983), xxiii. The tribal belt Caroe refers to here is roughly the agencies of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.



radical Islamists has changed the nature of the threat emanating from the FATA from one guided by the Pakistani state to one that has become an existential threat to the state itself and has dismantled or assumed control of an already fragile tribal structure.<sup>3</sup>

Assuming Pakistan and the U.S. stay the course and bring security and reasonable stability to the border area, the question will remain how to integrate and maintain security in the FATA. Changing the FATA from a semi-autonomous area is essential locally in order to improve the socio-economic situation of its inhabitants, regionally for the stability of Pakistan and its' relationship with Afghanistan and India, and globally for attempting to deny contested territories from infection by terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. Understanding the historical context of why the FATA has never fallen under control of the ruling government will help in attempting to achieve integration of the tribes of the FATA into the Pakistani state.

### **C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES**

Conventional wisdom maintains that integrating the tribes of the FATA completely into the writ of the Pakistani government is extremely difficult if not impossible. In contrast, my argument is that no central power has actually tried to integrate the FATA into the legal and social framework of the state. Historically, there were very good reasons for the decisions made to leave the tribes of the FATA semi-autonomous. The only valuable aspects of the terrain within the FATA are the transit routes that allowed access from Central Asia to the Indus River Valley; therefore, the tribes in the FATA only needed to cooperate when necessary for various military campaigns, trade, and diplomatic missions to avoid the attention of surrounding power centers. When any sustained attempts were made by outside powers or central governments to impose authority on tribal land or extract money from the tribes of the FATA, they generally faced immediate and violent resistance. The benefits gained from defeating the violent resistance were never worth the effort to the outside power and therefore were only half-heartedly attempted if at all. The resistance from the Pashtun

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<sup>3</sup> *Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA*, Crisis Group Asia Report No. 178 (Islamabad, Pakistan: International Crisis Group. October 21, 2009), i.

tribes is frequently attributed to their fiercely independent nature and what Louis Dupree describes as an “almost genetically” endowed expertise “at guerrilla warfare” due to “centuries of resisting all comers and fighting among themselves when no comers were available.”<sup>4</sup> This is a simple and incomplete explanation to the complex situation that has been playing out in the FATA for the past 117 years. The attacks of September 11, 2001 have at least momentarily changed the intrinsic value of the FATA due to the safe haven offered transnational terrorists and a growing threat to the Pakistani government.<sup>5</sup> The problem of how to address the frontier is now coming to the fore in domestic, regional, and international discussions. The good news is that if integration is really desired it has never really been attempted and therefore, despite popular myth, is not impossible.

The three primary reasons that manpower and resources have not been put forth to control the FATA are the way the central government viewed the area with regard to its national interests, the geopolitical situations influencing governments to focus their effort elsewhere, and the role of Islamist militants in the resistance to any encroachment by the central power. The British viewed the FATA as difficult terrain that added a layer of depth to their strategic separation from Russia. Afghanistan afforded the British a diplomatic separation in the form of a nation state, but the FATA added a natural barrier that further separated Russia from any ambitions it had toward the more valuable aspects of British India. Pakistan needed the FATA to be a compliant area loyal to the new nation initially and later shifted its view toward gaining “strategic depth” vis-à-vis India by leveraging the FATA for access to Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup> Each of these views were deemed best served by leaving the tribes autonomous and manipulating them to the strategic ends of the geopolitical context at the time.

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<sup>4</sup> Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), 425.

<sup>5</sup> Joshua T. White, “Afghanistan and Pakistan: Understanding a Complex Threat Environment,” Brief to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs on March 4, 2009, 2–3.

<sup>6</sup> There is more than one perception on what strategic depth means here. Generally, the concept is primarily focused on allowing Pakistan to focus on India in the event of conflict by maintaining political space and leverage to their west with influence over asymmetric assets and potentially increased maneuver space.

The second reason is tied closely to the first, but is more subject to regional and international agendas. Foreign interests and actions have repeatedly distracted the central government and prevented them from making a concerted effort to address the FATA. The British did not feel compelled to permanently occupy or integrate the FATA due to the geopolitics of two world wars and a retrenching British Empire, combined with the relatively successful use of Afghanistan to check Russian and then Soviet advances south of the Amu Darya River. After Partition, Pakistan has been most concerned with a persistent conflict with India and ensuring the tribes of the FATA could not be leveraged against them by Afghanistan in an attempt to change the disputed Durand Line. There were attempts to improve the social and economic situation in the FATA, but there has never been any real move to integrate the tribal lands due to competing interests and perceived uses of the frontier.

The third reason for a reluctance to integrate the FATA has been the role of Islamist militants. Islamist militants presented physical resistance and complicated the cultural landscape for both the British and Pakistanis. Additionally, they came to offer an opportunity for manipulation and deniability to the Pakistani government as asymmetric threats to their adversaries. A trend in all of these manifestations of radical Islam is the ability of religious figures to work within the Pashtun culture to leverage elements of tribal tradition in the pursuit of *jihad*. The British faced this resistance from local Sufi *pirs* influenced by exposure to both Deobandi and Wahhabi teachings in the form of violent conflicts that erupted any time the Raj encroached too far into the FATA physically or culturally. The general trend for the British was to quell the immediate disturbance with overwhelming force, pull back to the settled districts, and reestablish allowances to protect the roads across the border.<sup>7</sup> The British did not need the FATA and did not want to tackle the complexities of a religiously influenced tribal culture that they really did not understand. The British merely desired access to Afghanistan in the event they needed to check Russian advances. Pakistani interaction with religiously inspired groups in the FATA has been much more complicated. Until September 11,

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<sup>7</sup> Sana Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), 11–13.

2001, the Pakistani government worked with and through many of these organizations to fight asymmetric battles against the Indians, Soviets, and non-Pashtun groups in Afghanistan. It was viewed as advantageous to leave the FATA autonomous in an effort to decrease accountability to the Pakistani state in supporting these organizations seen as radical or often terrorists by the international community. Recently, the organizations working from the FATA have developed a much more revolutionary ideology and their violence has turned increasingly toward the Pakistani state in the type of resistance faced by the British. These groups now attack the Pakistani state as well as the western forces in Afghanistan under the banner of *jihad* for connected but slightly different reasons.

Conventional wisdom is that the “disequilibrium” between the social values and expectations of the tribes of the FATA and the policies of the central government are too divergent to allow integration.<sup>8</sup> A closer look at history reveals that in fact controlling these tribes has never really been attempted. Integrating the FATA is now necessary and an intelligent, robust effort to assimilate the frontier into the writ of the central government must be attempted for the first time.

#### **D. LITERATURE REVIEW**

There has been little interest in looking at a comparative analysis across the centuries of how various governments have attempted to consolidate power in the FATA. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema edited a collection of three essays describing the FATA from ancient times to post-9/11; however, the essays were not linked in analysis and were mostly descriptive in nature.<sup>9</sup> There are detailed journalistic accounts of how the Pakistani government facilitated jihad in and around the FATA during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and subsequently supported various personalities during the Civil War that followed, which culminated in backing the Taliban.<sup>10</sup> However, previous to these somewhat critical analyses of contemporary policies toward the border area,

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<sup>8</sup> Chalmers Johnson, *Revolutionary Change* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), 73.

<sup>9</sup> Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, ed., *Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan* (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> I am specifically referring to *Ghost Wars* by Steve Coll and *Taliban* by Ahmed Rashid here.

other accounts of the Afghan Kings, British, and Pakistani governments tell a story of how events happened more than addressing why government attempts to gain influence in the FATA succeeded or failed and to what extent they were really pursued. This paper attempts to bridge this gap by comparing past attempts to influence the tribes of the FATA to see what can be learned.

The same gap is present in looking at the effects of radical religious leaders in the FATA. Sana Haroon presents an in depth look at the influence of Islamic leaders in the frontier from the late 1800s through Partition and David Edwards adds specific case studies to our knowledge of how these religious leaders interacted with Pashtun culture. Both authors use an impressive amount of primary source documents to support their research in giving these accounts of the depth of religious influence on the frontier. Numerous authors, including Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, have picked up the mantle in the wake of the Soviet Invasion and subsequent actions of the Taliban, but they often leave unstated the existence of radical Islam in the frontier dating back to the late 1800's. Linking these studies can show the fundamental change that has occurred in the scope of radical Islamist influence in the FATA and help point out the necessity for the Pakistani state to curb the current form that is exerting increasing power through persistent force.

In order to fill the gap in the literature, a thorough understanding of the frontier and acknowledgement that the FATA is a challenge is necessary. Max Weber defines the state as holding "the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force" in a given territory.<sup>11</sup> The region now known as the FATA is relatively unique in comparative politics because no state or tribe has held a monopoly in these Pashtun lands. Weber furthers his definition of legitimacy in regards to the domination of a territory or people as deriving from a legal, traditional, or charismatic mandate.<sup>12</sup> Local legitimacy in the FATA historically derives from tribal tradition and occasionally from a charismatic

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<sup>11</sup> Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, 2nd Ed., ed. Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2006), 32.

<sup>12</sup> Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 32.

religious figure, but never from a legal mandate.<sup>13</sup> Any legitimate governing structure must work through the Pashtun to integrate a semblance of legality.

In order to investigate the FATA, a detailed knowledge of the Pashtun ethno-linguistic group is necessary as well. Since the FATA was not annexed by the British until the establishment of the Durand Line in 1893, the general regions dominated by the tribes that have historically inhabited the hills and mountains of the Hindu Kush and Sulaiman ranges west of the Indus River must be referenced in relation to the Afghan Kings prior to the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> It is difficult to find an inclusive history because the Pashtuns inhabiting these territories never built monuments or documented their existence due to the memory-based nature of their society. The fact that the “various empires which claimed in the past to rule this Frontier really only extended to control over the plains and one or two of the passages through the mountains” creates a situation where the only history of a people is documented by invaders and anthropologists.<sup>15</sup> Historians of the FATA are constrained by information documented by transients and not inhabitants until very recently. Anthropologists on the other hand, although immersing themselves in society, fall victim to what Akbar S. Ahmed calls a ‘narcissistic ethnic study’ where the researcher in an area like the FATA falls in love with the culture on which he depends for existence and often documents a poetic admiration without acknowledging all of the shortcomings.<sup>16</sup> Despite these problems and biases, some themes begin to occur in the manner in which governments have addressed the FATA.

Dupree’s *Afghanistan* gives a detailed descriptive history of the Afghan Kings that includes interaction with the British over the FATA. David Edwards and Sana

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<sup>13</sup> Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 15.

<sup>14</sup> The Durand Line was the first time a border was established between the British Raj and Afghanistan. Amir Abdurrahman Khan agreed to the boundary after two months of negotiations with Sir Mortimer Durand. After the Partition of India in 1947, Afghanistan disputed the border as invalid, but the tribes in the FATA have never really acknowledged it anyway.

<sup>15</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, xxiii.

<sup>16</sup> Akbar S. Ahmed, *Resistance and Control in Pakistan: Revised Edition* (New York, NY: Rutledge, 2004), 135.

Haroon expand on this history, as well as their contributions to the religious aspect mentioned earlier, to show how the tribes in the FATA interacted with the British government in India and the Afghan Kings as they struggled for influence in the frontier. These exhaustive accounts as well as Olaf Caroe's anthropological look at the Pashtuns of the greater border region are integral in analyzing the methods used by the Afghan Kings in Kabul and Kandahar to affect the tribes of the FATA during British rule. A trend of brutal punishment alternating with excessive payoffs and avoidance as well as utilization for addressing external threats emerges from these histories. Understanding of these trends is aided by an understanding of Pashtunwali or "the way of the Pashtun." Thomas Johnson and Chris Mason contribute helpful insight into the many subtleties of this ancient tribal code, but a more current look at the tribal situation in the turmoil of the FATA may be necessary to see if the code can still be leveraged or if that is even desirable.

The descriptive nature of literature concerning the FATA continued with the histories of Partition. Although volumes have been written about Pakistani policy with regard to its relationship with India, the story of how Pakistan chose to mimic British policy in the frontier generally appears as merely a section of a chapter in books describing the creation of the Pakistani state written in the 1960s.<sup>17</sup> The conventional wisdom in British and Partition era accounts of the FATA present the failure to integrate the tribes into the writ of the central government as a matter of the cost being too high. A closer read of the events prior to the Soviet invasion in 1979 paints a clearer picture of the central government as having a lack of interest in integration due to competing geopolitical concerns and an aversion to addressing a complicated religious and tribal culture. Current events now demand the Pakistani state takes action.

Joshua White, Akbar Ahmed, and Ahmed Rashid provide solid commentary and reasonable solutions on the current situation in the FATA and methods in which to address the anarchy that now exists. These analysts rightly disdain the antiquated methods that have persisted in administering the tribal areas and agree with many think

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<sup>17</sup> I am specifically referring to Wayne Wilcox's *Pakistan: The Consolidation of a Nation* and L.F. Rushbrook Williams' *The State of Pakistan*.

tanks proclaiming that change is necessary and long past due. Yet despite the breadth of knowledge available, it appears that the obvious has gone unsaid in that no government has ever really tried to fix the problem by bringing the tribes of the FATA to heel due to competing interests. The geopolitical context and compounding effects created by radical Islamists are valid reasons that governments have not put forth the effort to control the FATA. In order to curb the myth that integration of the FATA is too hard or not desirable for Pakistan, this study seeks to fill the gap in analysis to highlight why the attempt has not been made as growing international, regional, and local pressures now necessitate action to assimilate the tribes of the FATA into Pakistani society.

## **E. METHODS AND SOURCES**

In attempting to answer the question of why the FATA has never been integrated into the central government, I will examine the British and Pakistani approaches to dealing with the tribes of the frontier region. Specifically, I will conduct a historical study of the attempts at control or pacification taken by the British from 1893 through their Modified Forward Policy following the Third Anglo-Afghan War. Additionally, I will analyze four time periods of Pakistani governance to highlight different approaches and concerns that have developed following Partition. I have chosen to begin the study with the establishment of the Durand Line due to the ongoing disputation of this international border. In doing so, I will not be capturing many historic trends faced by numerous invaders before the British and Pakistani state, but will be able to focus my research on a history of the current defined boundaries of the FATA. The history prior to 1893 is important to the Pashtun narrative, but can accurately be captured by similar trends that appear in the British and Pakistani studies. The key considerations for each case are the manner in which the central government viewed the FATA relative to their national interest, the effects of the geopolitical context on addressing the FATA as well as the role of radical religion in preventing or resisting integration into the social and political mainstream by the tribes of the FATA. In analyzing these three facets of the problem, I will consider the level of control and at times compliance of the tribes of the FATA into the influence of the central government. There are no success stories to be



found here, but an analysis of the degree of failure and what reasons led to and sustained the separation from the construct of the state are important. This should not be confused with selecting cases to support my argument, but is merely a reflection of the samples available, which is precisely why this question is important.

## **F. THESIS OVERVIEW**

After giving an introduction to the terrain, people, and social structures of the FATA, I intend to organize my analysis into three sections. The first will look at the British approach to governing the FATA, from the creation of the Durand Line and how that came about in 1893 until their transition to the Modified Forward Policy, through the lens of the geopolitical context of British interests in greater India. In this chapter, I will also highlight how radical religion in the FATA was a catalyst to resistance of British penetration during the same time frame and how this resistance shaped British policy with regard to the Durand Line. The second section will pick up with the Pakistani methods of administering the FATA and chronicle the geopolitical context at play immediately following the Partition of India, after the 1971 war with India during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's administration, and during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and subsequent rise of the Taliban. This chapter is intended to show how regional and international interests created a situation where Pakistan lost some initial momentum to improve the social and economic situation in the FATA and the downward spiral in losing control of radical elements the state helped to create. Throughout the chapter, I will describe the role these radical religious organizations played in serving Pakistan's interests and how they have changed over time to threaten Pakistan's existence. The last chapter will summarize why integration of the FATA has not been attempted and link the analysis of why this is so in order to further the discussion of how integration should be accomplished. Additionally, I will give an update on the current situation following September 11, 2001 and briefly describe how I think Pakistan can integrate the FATA into the writ of the central government or at a minimum explain why it must.

I have chosen to organize the thesis chronologically and by attempting to isolate the key variables at play in order to highlight what has prevented these governments from

really attempting to integrate the FATA into the state. My logic in organizing the thesis in this manner is to show that marginalizing the FATA in the interest of greater national goals or interests is nothing new. Additionally, illustrating how domestic, regional, and international actors have made similar mistakes that have culminated in the violent situation currently seen in the region may avoid exacerbating the problem as we move forward. If integrating and controlling the FATA were easy, it would have been done; however, in analyzing the history, I intend to show three key reasons why integration and control have never really been attempted. Figure 1 is provided as a reference for the argument that follows in subsequent chapters.

Central Government	Reasons for decision not to integrate FATA.			Results generated by policies toward the FATA
	Perception of FATA	Geopolitical Context	Islamist Militancy	
British	A natural barrier both in terrain and people protecting the Indus River Valley	Added depth from Russian encroachment south of Central Asia during the Great Game	Provided added complexity to tribal relationships that reinforced the British decision that conquering was not worth the men and material required.	Chose to “hold the line” just west of the Indus to protect their natural resources while using carrots and sticks to keep the tribes of the FATA from really interfering with the settled areas
Post-Partition Pakistan	Loyalty needed from tribes of the FATA in order to allow focus on East Pakistan and West Pakistan’s eastern border with India	Security dilemma with India begins immediately and Afghanistan challenges legitimacy of the Durand Line	Relatively dormant during this time due to removal of colonial occupation, but Islamist activity in Northwest increases with creation of the Muslim state	Continued the British policies of political agents and FCR while working to diminish the idea of Pashtunistan and focusing on bigger priorities vis-à-vis India
Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto	Solidarity needed in the frontier due to the loss of Bangladesh so that further deterioration of Pakistan as a state for Muslims does not occur	India established as the dominant military power on the subcontinent and the Soviet Union and China chose their allegiances during the Cold War	Wahhabi madrassas begin to burgeon in the frontier and Bhutto chooses to support the Afghan Islamists against Daud	Unfulfilled attempts at social and economic reform with the aim of securing Pakistan’s solidarity in the wake of the 1971 war.
Zia ul-Haq	A sanctuary to grow asymmetric assets for use against the Soviets as well as the idea of “strategic depth” developing	Garnering money and military support from the Saudi and U.S. in order to solidify regime and increase status in security dilemma with India	Accelerated Islamist militancy through the mujahideen and begins fundamental social change due to “Kalashnikov culture” with jihad influence	The FATA turned into a militant training ground based in radical wahhabi Islamist ideology and the beginning of the appropriation of traditional power structures by religious leaders
Post-Zia Democracies	A gateway for influence in Afghanistan and access to Central Asia to gain strategic and economic depth	U.S. and Soviets abandon the region and Pakistan seeks to exploit the lack of a central government in Afghanistan	Pakistan enables the Taliban to conquer most of Afghanistan, but lose the influence they wanted to have over Mullah Omar	Use of FATA as a base and training ground for asymmetric threats to India in Kashmir and Afghanistan as well as Shia on Pakistani soil
What must be done today	The FATA is now a safe haven for irredentist insurgents that are an existential threat to the state	There is international pressure for regional security and the elimination of sanctuary for terrorists that seek to act globally	Afghan Taliban, AQ, and TTP elements as well as other terrorists and criminal networks have taken control of the FATA	The physical and cultural structure of the FATA must be manipulated by a change in strategy that is contingent upon a shift in Pakistan’s security paradigm

Figure 1. Reasons for decisions not to integrate the FATA

## **II. THE FATA AND THE PASHTUN**

In order to understand the FATA, a description of the terrain that has shaped generations of the Pashtun inhabiting the land is necessary. The severe terrain of the FATA contributes to the Pashtun tribes maintaining a flattened tribal structure that traditionally reinforced a very localized social order. Within this social order, the Pashtunwali code maintained a governing framework for interaction within and between a society of warrior tribes. The perceived and real independent nature of the Pashtun derives from the history of the land and the peoples' interaction with the numerous transient empires that passed through. This perception is part of the conventional wisdom of why the Pashtun of the FATA have never been conquered. The perception of independence must be understood, but falls short of explaining the lack of integration into a central government.

A discussion of the geography and Pashtun tradition is critical to place in context some of the challenges faced by the British and then the Pakistani government when addressing the FATA. Many of these challenges have been amplified by history simply because the British and Pakistani government chose not to confront them in deference to higher geopolitical priorities elsewhere in their empire or on their eastern border in the case of Pakistan. The following discussion sets the stage for understanding that can guide a framework for integration in the years ahead.



Figure 2. Map of the FATA

## A. TERRAIN AND PEOPLE

Caroe stated that geographically the Pashtun country was difficult to describe, but is best thought of “as a long narrow fortification running parallel in two belts, first a moat and then a rampart, along the line of the Indus.”<sup>18</sup> The rampart that Caroe describes running from Pakistan’s northwestern Himalaya zone southwest to the Sulaiman Mountains is roughly the FATA. The moat, or the Indus River, provided irrigation to the plains between the fingers of the mountains stretching to meet the Indus. These areas, including the Peshawar plain, proved valuable for farming and therefore were settled and integrated into first British, then Pakistani society. The rugged hills and mountains, reaching 16,000 feet in places, were of little value with the exception of various crossing points that accessed either Central Asia or the Indian subcontinent. The FATA is naturally an uninviting place that is either freezing or sweltering depending on the season and has nothing really to offer a governing power other than a few transit routes. These strictly environmental reasons contributed to the rulers of the many empires attempting dominion in Delhi and Kabul to really only extend their “control over the plains and one or two of the passages through the mountains.”<sup>19</sup> Notably even control of the passes was subsidized by paying for security from the tribes.

There is a distinction made among the Pashtun between those that inhabit the plains and those that inhabit the mountains. Caroe stated that those that inhabit the plains “have always been regarded as the senior branch of the race” mostly because of their interaction with occupying empires or occasional rule over the areas of modern day Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of India.<sup>20</sup> The “highlanders,” including the Afridis, Orakzais, Waziris, and Mehsuds, on the other hand, are the “tribes who never fell under the effective sway of any recorded imperial authority and now form the backbone of the so-called tribal belt.”<sup>21</sup> The uncompromising nature of the mountain Pashtun and the

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<sup>18</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, xix.

<sup>19</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, xxiii.

<sup>20</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, xvi.

<sup>21</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, xvii.

plains Pashtun generally under greater government control are best summed up by the Pashtun proverb that describes the Pashtun self-conception in stating, “honor ate up the mountains; taxes ate up the plains.”<sup>22</sup>

The terrain of the highlanders, the FATA, enhances the flattened tribal structure of the Pashtun. A flat tribal structure means each individual and each tribe are seen as equal and therefore negotiation must be held sometimes with literally every village in order to accomplish diplomacy in the FATA.<sup>23</sup> It is easy to comprehend why the geographically isolated nature of the villages and a nomadic history would drive tribes to want to speak for themselves and their unique situation. In general terms, each Pashtun tribe breaks down from the larger tribal group to the nuclear family, but the best description of how to think of the individual Pashtun’s allegiances comes from M. Jamil Hanifi as quoted from Johnson:

The Afghan individual is surrounded . . . by concentric rings consisting of family, extended family, clan, tribe, confederacy, and major cultural-linguistic group. The hierarchy of loyalties corresponds to these circles and becomes more intense as the circle gets smaller . . . in case of crisis, his recourse is to the kinship and, if necessary, the larger cultural group. National feelings and loyalties are filtered through the successive layers.<sup>24</sup>

## **B. TRADITIONAL SOCIAL ORDER**

The role of the *khans*, the *maliks*, and the *mullahs* are critical to an understanding of the Pashtun decision-making process. The positions of *khan* and *malik* are traditional leadership roles within the Pashtun tribes of the FATA. The *khan* of a clan is responsible for ensuring the well-being of the village based on his accumulated wealth, wives, proven valor in battle, and sons.<sup>25</sup> When visitors are taken in as guests, the *khan* often works

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<sup>22</sup> Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 28.

<sup>23</sup> Some tribal structures are a hierarchy where one elder can make decisions for an entire group. Anyone trying to work with Pashtun tribes usually has difficulty in negotiations due to the consensus required to come to a decision due to the flattened structure of the Pashtun, especially in the FATA.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Johnson and Chris M. Mason, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire” (*International Security* 32, no. 4, Spring 2008), 51–53.

<sup>25</sup> Johnson and Mason, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire,” 62.

with the *mullah* to ensure proper hospitality is rendered during their stay with the clan in the *hujra* or traditional area used as a male social center. The *malik* is a popularly selected spokesman for the clan that is respected and listened to during council and in village affairs, but like the *khan* cannot give orders to anyone not in his immediate family. The position of *malik* is sometimes hereditary and often is the first to speak to intruders whether they are from other tribes or the British or Pakistani Political Agents.<sup>26</sup> Since Pashtun tribal society is flat rather than hierarchical, decisions that had to result in an order to a clan member or decision outside the immediate family had to be discussed at a *jirga*.

A *jirga*, or tribal council, can take place in the form of an entire tribe for major matters or at the sub-tribe or clan level for matters of lesser importance. The *jirga* consists of the *khan*, *malik*, other tribal elders, and as many of the younger warriors and members as may be present meeting and listening to all opinions concerning the matter requiring a decision. Smaller *jirgas* can be conducted over legal matters and offenses within a village to keep disputes from becoming larger. Larger tribal *jirgas* can concern war with another tribe or foreign intruder over major grievances. The critical aspects of the *jirga* are that everything takes place in the open and the final decision is adhered to by the entire group concerned.<sup>27</sup> If a *jirga* is convened to discuss going to war, it would also generally appoint the military commander who will lead and give orders to other members of the clan for a limited time during fighting. The fighting group is called a *lashkar*. Therefore, generally the largest militant unit in the FATA was the males of a clan and they would usually only fight to defend up to their tribal boundaries.<sup>28</sup> The *mullah* generally played a small role in tribal *jirgas* as the decisions were based on traditional “laws” of *Pashtunwali* and not religious rulings based on Sharia.<sup>29</sup>

The *mullah's* role was at the mosque, which became the place for exchanging information, rumors, stories, and gossip as well as leading daily and weekly prayers to

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<sup>26</sup> Johnson and Mason, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire,” 62.

<sup>27</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, 411.

<sup>28</sup> Johnson and Mason, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire,” 63.

<sup>29</sup> A discussion of *Pashtunwali*, the Pashtun tribal code, follows in the next section.



support the village. The *mullah* was generally one of the few literate people in the village or clan and therefore could shape the message delivered from the Quran as well as relate news events from distant regions if a newspaper was acquired from a traveler or during the *mullah's* travels. The thoughts, gossip, and rumor expressed by the *mullah* carried the same weight as substantiated fact due to the insular nature of tribal society. Each village did not have its own *mullah* due to the terrain and proximity to urban religious centers of learning; therefore, FATA *mullahs* often represented more than one clan or tribe.<sup>30</sup> Haroon notes that “tensions created by geographic proximity coupled with social and economic confinement gave rise to a complex system of inter-village and inter-tribal relationships marked by intense competitions between clans, even those of the same lineage, which often turned violent and sparked blood feuds that could go on for generations.”<sup>31</sup> Often the only acceptable arbitrator that could stop bloodshed and reach a compromise in these disputes was the *mullah*.<sup>32</sup> Due to the respect afforded Islam in the tribal areas, *mullahs* were some of the few individuals that could travel freely and for this reason came in touch with more of the surrounding world than the clans. These contacts included other religious leaders, various parts of Afghanistan, ruling parties in India under the British, and later Pakistani officials. The Afghans and British would attempt to leverage the *mullahs* in frontier areas where the *maliks* could not be purchased in order to gain access to the passes through the Hindu Kush and attempt to placate the more hostile tribes. However, during times of crisis, when greater tribal independence was challenged, when foreigners attempted to occupy large tracts of land, or when tribes were not appropriately compensated for use of land, the *mullahs* would rise outside the normal tribal arrangements and lead a coalition of tribes to war. War did not always come in the form of *jihad*, but always involved a charismatic *mullah* who could inspire multiple clans or tribes to follow his banner outside of tribal boundaries for a persuasive purpose.

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<sup>30</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 70–74.

<sup>31</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 76.

<sup>32</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 76.

### C. PASHTUNWALI

Permeating the tribal structure and social order is Pashtunwali, which is literally the way of the Pashtun or more precisely a code of honor or sort of unwritten constitution guiding Pashtun life. Pashtunwali stresses the personal values of independence, honor, revenge, and hospitality. The Pashtun pride themselves on social equality and among the males cannot be ordered by another Pashtun without a collective decision being reached. Johnson points out that the result of the extended family taking responsibility for the actions of individuals' results in this male independence being "more about freedom from being ordered what to do than freedom to do what he pleases."<sup>33</sup> In actuality, Pashtunwali demands independence, while constraining this freedom with the other three personal values that dictate action.

The most important duty of a Pashtun male is to uphold his honor or *nang*. Defending his *nang* requires the defense and control of his *zan*, *zar*, and *zamin* (women, gold, and land), which are collectively known as *namus*. *Zamin* is a flexible concept that can be individual land holdings or tribal boundaries depending on the context.<sup>34</sup> The importance of *nang* is best summarized in the worst derogatory term for another Pashtun, which is *dauz* or literally "a person with no honor."<sup>35</sup> The requirement for a Pashtun to defend his honor often results in his requirement to seek revenge. Revenge or *badal* is required when a Pashtun has been wronged and action to correct the situation is required regardless of the consequences. *Badal* often spirals into intra-clan and inter-clan conflicts that can last for years and take the form of blood feuds unless a solution can be mediated through a *jirga* to end hostilities.<sup>36</sup>

Hospitality in Pashtunwali is embodied in the concepts of *nanawatey* meaning begging for pardon or protection and *melmastia* meaning unconditional hospitality and

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<sup>33</sup> Johnson and Mason, "No Sign Until the Burst of Fire," 62.

<sup>34</sup> Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*, 24.

<sup>35</sup> Johnson and Mason, "No Sign Until the Burst of Fire," 59.

<sup>36</sup> Shinwari, *Understanding FATA: Attitudes Towards Governance, Religion & Society in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas*, 21.

protection even to enemies. *Nanawatey* is usually conducted by an offending party and involves going to the clan of the wronged family and asking for forgiveness at the victim's mercy. This action often includes bringing gifts to show sincerity for the offense. *Melmastia* is the greatest obligation under Pashtunwali and requires giving shelter and protection to those on the owners land. The hospitality inherent in these two concepts is linked to revenge in the host not wanting to bring hostility to his land.<sup>37</sup> Both of these concepts were leveraged by the Afghan Taliban and Al Qaeda elements fleeing Afghanistan to the FATA in the wake of the U.S. and NATO invasion in 2001.

The Pashtunwali code provides social norms that cherish independence while constraining that freedom with tribal mandates for action in certain situations. I disagree with Thomas Johnson's assertion that Pashtunwali is not an "absence of governance, nor summary judgment, nor a lynch mob at work" due to the violent manifestations of the anachronistic social norms involved with the justice administered. However, I do agree with his opinion that Pashtunwali is "an alternative form of social organization with an advanced conflict resolution mechanism."<sup>38</sup> The problem in the FATA is that the system is now broken due to the influx of refugees, terrorists, and insurgents that have changed some of the very social organization that made the Pashtun who they are. The constant conflict inherent with the concept of *badal* and the Pashtun narrative of extreme independence have played into the myth of the impossibility of integrating the FATA due to the complexity of the culture. The shift in social organization brought on by 33 years of Islamist militancy has now deemed irrelevant any truth to this narrative due to the threat posed to Pakistan from the FATA.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

The social structure and the terrain of the FATA made the tribes "living between the Kabul and Gomal rivers . . . harder to control on account of their intensely democratic

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<sup>37</sup> Shinwari, *Understanding FATA: Attitudes Towards Governance, Religion & Society in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas*, 20.

<sup>38</sup> Johnson and Mason, "No Sign Until the Burst of Fire," 61.

organization.”<sup>39</sup> The organization is democratic due to each individual rating an opinion at a tribal council, but real change was never possible due to the constraints of tribal traditions. The difficulty in control stems from the independent nature of each tribe and their resistance to rule from any other. The Pashtun claim of never being subjects only emboldens their independence and desire to remain autonomous; however, this independence can lead to an overestimation of their strength and allows myths to reinforce some sort of “historical determinism.”<sup>40</sup> The determination was less a product of Pashtun independence and more a product of central powers making a decision to leave the FATA autonomous in view of how their national interests were prioritized.

The fact is foreign invaders did not occupy these regions because there was nothing attractive about the “wilderness, harsh climate and lack of resources” in the FATA, so they bypassed the hills and moved on to “greener pastures” which were a higher priority.<sup>41</sup> The terrain has allowed and reinforced Pashtun independence. The autonomy enjoyed by the tribes was a minor concern that had to be addressed by the British and Pakistan in the form of minor military engagements and political concessions in order to protect what was important to their governments and focus on bigger issues. The FATA is no longer a minor concern due to local irredentist goals, regional instability caused by persistent violence, and the threat of international terrorism that continually originates from these borderlands. Before addressing the present situation, much can be learned from the British and Pakistani experiences in placating the tribes of the FATA while attempting to manage what was important to their respective empire or government.

The next chapter argues that the British allowed the FATA to remain a semi-autonomous area for three main reasons. First, the British were not concerned with land that was relatively void of fertile ground or natural resources. Second, geopolitically, they were primarily worried about Russian encroachment on the Indus River Valley and

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<sup>39</sup> Shinwari, *Understanding FATA: Attitudes Towards Governance, Religion & Society in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas*, 12.

<sup>40</sup> Cheema, ed., *Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, 65.

<sup>41</sup> Cheema, ed., *Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, 64.

the best means to achieve security in the Northwest portions of British India. Third, the small, yet frequent, violent uprisings generated by religious zealots created a complex cultural situation in the FATA that the British chose not to integrate into the more controllable population in and east of the Indus River Valley.

### III. THE BRITISH AND THE FATA

Great Britain became increasingly influential on the Indian Subcontinent's periphery throughout the eighteenth century due to their naval dominance and trade interests, especially in Bengal. As long as profits were high and taxes virtually nonexistent, the John Company Raj was willing to leave the interior of India to the Mughals, Afghans, Marathas, and Sikhs. European competition for global influence changed Britain's view of the subcontinent. After 1828, the Raj began to look west as Russia penetrated deeper into Persia to compete with the British for influence there. British fear of the "creeping bear" drove exploration of the Indus River out of a belief that eventually Russia would have to be fought somewhere on the Frontier. Between 1843 and 1849, the British fought their way up the Indus to capture and then control first Sind and then Punjab. Britain saw extending its territory to the Indus as "manifest destiny" in the desire to expand commercial markets and leverage the land for greater profit.<sup>42</sup> The result was 100,000 square miles of "India's most fertile soil, destined to become the breadbasket of the British Empire," annexed along the Indus.<sup>43</sup> Notably, Kashmir, with a majority Muslim population, was given to Hindu rulers at this time by the British, which continues to be a key obstacle to regional stability today. Once the Indus and the fruits that derived from its water were attained, only Russia could incite the British to seek any more than a stalemate in the Frontier as part of the drama played out in what is called the Great Game.<sup>44</sup>

Russia and later the Soviet Union never really did this; therefore, Britain conducted enough punitive military expeditions and established adequate control mechanisms to protect their interests on the subcontinent without exerting the effort to integrate the FATA because they did not want or need to take this action. The British

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<sup>42</sup> Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India*, Eighth ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 230.

<sup>43</sup> Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 230.

<sup>44</sup> The "Great Game" is a common term used to describe the contest between the British and Russian empires for influence in Southwest Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East primarily during the nineteenth century.

early on discovered that the terrain and people of Afghanistan and the frontier were a complicated problem that would be difficult and expensive to control if conquered. Their primary concern was having enough influence in Kabul to resist Russian encroachment and access to the interior of Afghanistan should they need to counter a Russian advance toward India. The history of the British in the frontier is a constant search to find a balance of peace with the tribes west of the Indus while maintaining influence in Afghanistan with the perception of strength in the form of watch and ward in the frontier. The FATA was only valuable as a fence with gates that could be opened to the west when and if the British needed to advance in that direction.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the challenges faced by the British in securing the settled areas along the Indus River valley, while balancing how far west to establish their presence in order to influence the Afghans and be ready to counter Russian political and military maneuvers. The establishment of the international boundary between British India and Afghanistan and the methods developed for administering the FATA will be discussed as well as the resistance from religiously inspired tribal groups at different times during British occupation. The history of *jihad* in the FATA is ancient and the British experience with the “mad *mullahs*” contributed to their decision to avoid the complexities involved with conquering the frontier.<sup>45</sup> The origins of militancy nested in religious rhetoric during British rule have caused recent manifestations to see themselves as successors to a tradition of *jihad* and understanding the causes and history of the resistance can help point to a solution to a violent social trend.

#### **A. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE FATA**

Although the Pashtun narrative and the history of Britain in India are important to the context of controversy on the frontier, a discussion of the FATA must begin with the agreement between Afghanistan and Britain over the Durand Line. The Durand Line was not defined as the boundary of India, although in fact it became one, but instead a line over which neither the Afghans nor the British would interfere with the others interests.

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<sup>45</sup> “Mad *mullahs*” is a common term to describe the perceived fanatical religious leaders that the British frequently encountered during uprisings along the frontier.

The British did not want the line to be a boundary because they “did not intend to absorb the tribes into their administrative system, only to extend their own, and exclude the Amir’s, authority in the territory east and south of the line.”<sup>46</sup> The Durand Line really established a tribal belt to the west of the settled districts that created “a buffer to a buffer” and did not at all have the rigidity associated with other international boundaries.<sup>47</sup>



Figure 3. Representation of the Great Game

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<sup>46</sup> Caroe, *The Pathans*, 382.

<sup>47</sup> Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 427. The first buffer here is the buffer Afghanistan provided between Britain and Russia.



## 1. The Durand Line

Prior to 1893, the British had fought two wars with the Afghans and transitioned from a Close Border Policy to a Forward Policy due to Russian encroachment from the north. Following their humiliating defeat in 1842, which concluded the First Anglo-Afghan War, and during the two wars with the Sikhs later in the same decade, the British realized that the job of controlling the tribal areas of their western frontier and Afghanistan was beyond their capabilities in India at the time. Therefore, the Close Border Policy sought to avoid aggression on tribal territory and not interfere with tribal affairs including paying subsidies and allowances to the tribes to maintain peace and order. The paramilitary Punjab Frontier Force, later to become the Frontier Corps as part of the Indian Army, was formed during this time to help close the border. After the conquest of Sindh and the Punjab, and with increasing British resources, the Forward Policy was undertaken in response to the Russian armies pushing closer to the borders of Afghanistan. The Forward Policy essentially called for a strategic line of defense against Russian advances in Central Asia, which included increasing the British sphere of influence in Afghanistan. In 1878, when the Afghan King refused to allow a British envoy into Kabul, the British Viceroy, Lord Lytton declared war on Afghanistan. The war resulted in a permanent advance and continued control of the Khyber Pass and eventually Amir Abdur Rahman Khan on the Afghan thrown with help and approval from the British.<sup>48</sup>

The Durand Line was established during a mission to Kabul between Abdur Rahman and Sir Mortimer Durand, the British Indian Foreign Secretary, in November of 1893. Prior to this mission, the British had already had a hand in negotiating the western and northern boundaries of Afghanistan to create a buffer between British India and Russia's ambitions. Before the Amir requested this meeting with the British to discuss the southern and eastern boundary, he had been on a mission of "internal imperialism" by attempting to put in order the "hundreds of petty chiefs, plunderers, robbers, and cut

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<sup>48</sup> Noor-ul Haq, "Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan" (*Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, ed. Dr Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema. Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2005), 14–15.

throats,” which included the tribes in the FATA, by “breaking down the feudal and tribal system and substituting one grand community under one law and one rule.”<sup>49</sup> From the British perspective, the Durand Line was a compromise between two competing theories. The “backward group” argued for a boundary along the Indus River due to the expense and effort required in occupying the mountains to the west. The “forward group” countered with a border running roughly from Kabul through Gazni to Kandahar to enhance India’s security.<sup>50</sup> Abdur Rahman wanted to rid himself of the incessant tribal revolts in the frontier area and free himself from the worry of British road and railway construction that were oriented through the passes at Kabul and Kandahar and were “pushing like a knife into” his “vitals.”<sup>51</sup> The result was roughly what the international boundary is today with a majority of the eastern Pashtun hill tribes falling on the British side of the border. Britain also retained the right to speak for Afghanistan in foreign affairs. With the exception of relinquishing his right to foreign policy, Abdur Rahman appears to have gotten most of what he desired geographically even though he gave fair warning about the tribes of Waziristan specifically when telling Durand:

If (the frontier tribes) were included in my dominions I should be able to make them fight against any enemy of England and myself, by the name of a religious war, under the flag of their co-religious Muslim ruler . . . I will gradually make them peaceful subjects and good friends of Great Britain. But if you cut them out of my dominions, they will neither be of any use to you nor to me.<sup>52</sup>

The boundary ostensibly determined between Afghanistan and British India, the British could continue setting up their administration and accomplishing their goals in the frontier.

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<sup>49</sup> Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 417, 419.

<sup>50</sup> Noor-ul Haq, “Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan,” 15.

<sup>51</sup> Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 426.

<sup>52</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 18.

## 2. Defining and “Ruling” the Tribal Areas

Lieutenant Winston Churchill metaphorically viewed “the most natural way of preventing an enemy from entering a house is to hold the door and windows; and the general consensus of opinion is that to secure India it is necessary to hold the passes of the mountains.”<sup>53</sup> Haroon more specifically stated that the British had two goals in the frontier. She asserts the preparation of the highlands for potential mobilization and the complicity and involvement of the tribes as facilitators of British policy and not antagonists to it are what drove the British to their methods in attempting to exert influence in the frontier region.<sup>54</sup> In order to accomplish these goals, Britain had to figure out how to pacify and influence the tribes. In 1876, the British signed an agreement with the Khan of Kalat that gained them access to the Bolan Pass and basing in Quetta through a lease. Robert Groves Sandeman, the first Agent to the Governor-General of Balochistan, arranged what is now known as the Sandeman system to successfully administer and control Balochistan. Sandeman essentially paid large subsidies to the tribal leaders to maintain peace and order through their Khassadar Regiments.<sup>55</sup> Khassadars were Balochi tribesman loyal to their tribal leader who was ultimately loyal to the Khan of Kalat and therefore accountability could ultimately rest with one man. The hierarchical nature of the Baloch tribal system allowed the Sandeman system to work. The flattened tribal structure of the Pashtun would make a similar system untenable in the FATA. The British came to understand that administration and pacification in the Pashtun frontier was not as easy in large part for this reason.

In 1877, Lord Lytton realized the tribal areas in the frontier that would become the FATA were too dispersed to be defended by the available British forces and would have to be managed politically. At the time, the British government of the Punjab Province was responsible for administering the five settled districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and Dera Ghazi Khan and accomplished this through

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<sup>53</sup> David B. Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1996), 189.

<sup>54</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 12.

<sup>55</sup> Noor-ul Haq, “Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan,” 13.

appointed Deputy Commissioners. Political Agents were appointed as counterparts to the Deputy Commissioners and were required to liaise with the tribes of the tribal agencies adjacent to the settled districts. The Political Agents were to recruit tribal militias and levies to police the area, establish peace, and build outposts where the militias were intended to garrison.<sup>56</sup> The Political Agents soon realized that in order to liaise with the tribes they needed to further define the locations and composition of the numerous clan affiliations in their agencies. Therefore, the military and political departments produced survey reports with topographical descriptions of land and tribal tables as they went about loosely mapping the Durand Line in 1893. The British used this data to further define the agencies and map out what tribes were responsible for what areas in the frontier. The problem was that these tribal boundaries shifted as conflict among the tribes and clans constantly changed the amount of land and power held by any one tribe. Therefore, the process of creating agencies was a depiction of pre-existing political landscapes that the administrative processes of cartography could not keep up with as political space was redefined among the tribes.<sup>57</sup>

The difficulties in politically influencing the tribes would become more apparent over the next 50 years, but the British forged ahead with creating defined borders and rules to govern the frontier that they little understood. The Khyber and Kurram agencies were actually created before the Durand Line in 1879 and 1892 respectively as a means to control the passes to Afghanistan; however, influence was primarily concerned with these routes and not overall stability in the region. In 1895, the North and South Waziristan Agencies as well as the Malakand Agency were established which stretched the defined borders of the tribes from Dir to Balochistan.<sup>58</sup> The British were allowed to maintain a presence in the tribal areas by paying increasing allowances to the tribes for the militias as stated previously. In 1901 two significant administrative changes occurred. First the NWFP was established to include the settled districts but not Dir,

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<sup>56</sup> Noor-ul Haq, "Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan," 23.

<sup>57</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 5, 10.

<sup>58</sup> Noor-ul Haq, "Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan," 24. The Malakand agency would later be included in the NWFP.

Chitral, and Swat or the tribal areas. The intent was to further integrate the Pashtun of the lowlands and their natural resources while attempting to keep the Pashtuns from the hilly frontier from plundering settled British territory. The Political Agents still reported to the central government in the Punjab and sought gradual pacification of the tribes. Additionally, the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR), which had been in existence previously, were formalized as the method for the Political Agents to administer justice in the FATA.

The FCR allowed the tribes to refer crimes to *jirgas* and empowered the Political Agents with the right to enforce collective punishments designed to force tribes to police unruly individuals or elements themselves. The *jirga* was used in an attempt to nest British influence within tribal tradition. Under the FCR, the Political Agent acting as a District Magistrate convenes a *jirga* with the assent of the tribal elders and the accused to determine the guilt or innocence with regards to a crime. Generally, the Political Agent agreed with the recommendations of the *jirga* in an attempt to allow the tribes to enforce their laws based on their customs. However, the Political Agent could disagree with the ruling and chose to appoint another *jirga*.<sup>59</sup> The collective punishments allowed were in keeping with Pashtun tradition and were an effective mechanism for the British to attempt to enforce a judicial system in the FATA. That being said, the FCR imposed by the British would not have been tolerated without the allowances paid to the tribal elders.

The key to British influence and administration as well as the cause of much of the unrest in the FATA was the appointment of *maliks* to serve as the spokesperson for a tribe. Usually the British accepted the tribe's appointed spokesman, but occasionally had to find someone they could work with. The Political Agents paid the allowances to the *maliks* to be distributed proportionally to the clans based on their contribution to the militias and levies protecting the lines of communication, building the rudimentary infrastructure, and keeping the peace. The British also paid the *maliks* a special compensation for their duties, which went against the equality normally accepted in

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<sup>59</sup> Shinwari, Understanding FATA: Attitudes Towards Governance, Religion & Society in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, 4.

Pashtun tradition.<sup>60</sup> The misunderstanding of the tribal dynamic involved when *maliks* were elevated above the equality demanded by *Pashtunwali* combined with the corruption of the *maliks* in taking care of those closest to their clan first were an understandable result of the complexity of the Pashtun tribes in the FATA. Regardless, the cause of much of the tribal unrest was the impression of favoritism among the tribes or the encroachment of the British agenda on the FATA through their influence with the *maliks*.

The fact that the only real vote the Pashtun had was through their interaction with the Political Agents and his relationship with the *maliks* caused the tribes to seek to voice their opinions violently. Generally, violence was confined to raids by individual tribes and clans on British lines of communication and outposts to extract weapons and rations. However, numerous times, including 1897, 1930, and 1937, religious figures served as charismatic leaders to unite the clans in the name of *jihad*, often with the help of tribes from the western side of the Durand Line and complicity from the Afghan King.

## **B. THE ROOTS OF *JIHAD* IN THE FATA**

The manifestations of Islamist inspired rebellion in the FATA encountered by the British did not necessarily deter an empire already not intending to conquer the FATA, but they did reinforce the complexity of the cultural landscape that would have to be controlled. The effort needed to control the complex religious and tribal organization of the FATA simply would have taken more men and material than the British Empire deemed prudent relative to the value of the terrain in question. The importance of analyzing the British experience with *jihad* is to show that Wahhabi Salafist ideas and practices as well as political designs through the Deobandi school were not new to the FATA in the second half of the twentieth century. Radical Islamist ideas and motivations against the perceived infidels were established in the late nineteenth century and were

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<sup>60</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 23. In 1931, 7 percent or 65,000 rupees out of the 885,000 rupees paid went to the maliks.

only relatively dormant for a few decades in the FATA after Partition.<sup>61</sup> The following section will look at some of the more famous cases of Islamic leaders rising to coalesce the tribes to violence in order to show similarities to the situation faced in the FATA today. The motivations for power and personal influence then as now were as much at the root of *jihad* as was the religious motivation professed. An important aspect to note is the change in traditional social order that comes about during these times of crisis where the mullahs leverage religion to increase their role in the tribal power system. This is a trend that is more pervasively at play today, but must be placed in context historically in order to address how to combat Islamist militancy in the future to help with integration into the state.

### **1. The Hadda Mulla Najmuddin and the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya Sufi Order**

Following the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880) and creation of the Durand Line, the Hadda Mulla initiated and led mobilizations against the British throughout the 1890s by targeting British communication lines and militia posts in the newly formed tribal areas. The Mulla Najmuddin studied under his Sufi *pir*, the Akhund Abdul Ghaffer, in Swat during the late 1860s and early 1870s. Abdul Ghaffer was from the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya Sufi order, which stressed meshing Sufism with a return to the text of the Quran as a means to address the “crisis of Islam” by re-introducing principles of individual religious practice and moving away from the role of the *pir* as sole spiritual mediator.<sup>62</sup> Abdul Ghaffer was influenced by Sayyid Ahmed of Rai Bareilly during his wahhabi movement into the Eastern Pashtun regions and against the Sikhs in the 1820’s and 1830’s. The wahhabi influence of Sayyid Ahmed, attained during a six-year trip to Mecca around 1815, led Abdul Ghaffur to strongly support revivalist principles and encourage his students to promote a strict adherence to the word

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<sup>61</sup> A call for *jihad* was used by Muslim invaders prior to British presence and Pakistan used the concept of *jihad* during its wars with India, but not as part of a policy led by religious figures. *Jihad* was not new, but resisting cultural intrusion from a colonial invader was novel at the time.

<sup>62</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 34, 49.

of the Quran through travel, preaching, and personal example.<sup>63</sup> Additionally, a deep historical link to the Deobandi school and the Pashtun can be traced to the Rohilla Pashtuns that occupied parts of the Upper Pradesh area in Northern India during the Mughal Empire. The Rohilla were part of the Yusufzai tribe from just east of Peshawar. Sayyid Ahmed grew up in Rohilla territory and was likely a Pashtun and definitely spoke Pashto, which allowed him to gain traction quickly in the frontier area during his *jihad* against the Sikhs and British. The eventual founders of the Deoband school were from the Rohilla Pashtun areas of Northern India as well and strong circumstantial evidence points to Pashtun lineage being involved with the founding of Deoband. The early frequency of Deoband missions to the frontier can be linked for political reasons to generating resistance to the British but also for ethnic and linguistic reasons as the graduating students were just going home to their extended families.<sup>64</sup>

After excelling in his studies under Abdul Ghaffer, Mulla Najmuddin was sent to Hadda, a town 6 kilometers south of Jalalabad, where he settled and created a religious center in the mid-1870. It was not coincidence that the location had a pagan history and was close to what would become the border with the British.<sup>65</sup> The Hadda Mulla was from an insignificant family, but through his appointment by a prestigious *pir* he gained status as a recognized spiritual heir to a great saint and the ability to give instruction to his own disciples. Mulla Najmuddin's revivalist leanings were apparent immediately as he encouraged the people around Jalalabad to abandon the traditional Sufi customs of paying a bride-price, charging interest, as well as singing and dancing at celebrations and to only embrace customs condoned by Islam.<sup>66</sup> As the Hadda Mulla's reknown spread, his *langar* and number of *shaykhs* and *talibs* grew. The *langar* was the "guest-house-cum-dining hall" where the Mulla would feed and shelter the numerous travelers going

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<sup>63</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 42–43. Sayyid is one spelling of this name that links the owner as a descendent of the Prophet. Sayyid Ahmed was a descendent from his mother's side.

<sup>64</sup> "Hindustani Fanatics, India's Pashtuns, and Deobandism – Connections" (Williamsburg, VA: Tribal Analysis Center, 2009), 2. Additionally Sana Haroon points to Deoband influence in FATA, 93.

<sup>65</sup> Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*, 138–139.

<sup>66</sup> Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*, 137, 156.



east and west using the Khyber Pass and moving through Jalalabad. The Hadda Mulla had hundreds of *shaykhs* who were men that decided to stay in Hadda and serve the Mulla. *Shaykhs* often married local women and were responsible for keeping up the *langar*. *Talibs* were the students who came to learn from the Mulla and were at his service and direction during their stay. The Hadda Mulla's *langar* became the meeting place for many *mullahs* throughout the FATA to discuss various religious decisions for bigger *jirgas* and other legal matters. Through these meetings and messages from his *shaykhs* and *talibs*, the Hadda Mulla was able to spread his teachings and gain information from as far as Herat and Delhi.<sup>67</sup>

Influential *mullahs* such as the Hadda Mulla maintained their own *lashkars* consisting of their *shaykhs* and *talibs* as well as other Pasthun villagers from tribes they served. An influential *mullah's* *lashkar* was not subject to the same territorial limits as a local tribal militia. The *mullahs* used their *lashkars* for three specific missions. First, they would use their *lashkars* to travel with them to enforce truces or exact fines from tribes that they served based on previous mediation of grievances. Second, they would travel to punish people in violation of religious law or those who had defied the *mullah's* moral directives. These two were mostly a policing function performed with the agreement of the tribal elders. Finally, and a significant development as a result of Afghan and British encroachment on the FATA, *lashkars* could be used to enforce the *mullahs* political directives.<sup>68</sup> These political directives were often directed at the British in the form of *jihad*, but were generally oriented on smaller outposts in the form of raids and were not intended to take or hold land. The Hadda Mulla had a larger operation in mind.

## **2. The Tribal Revolt of 1897**

The Hadda Mulla saw British encroachment in the form of roads, railways, and forts into the tribal areas during the Great Game as a threat to Islam as well as his personal influence. In the summer of 1897, he was able to promote coordinated assaults

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<sup>67</sup> Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*, 148–149.

<sup>68</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 85–87.

on well-fortified garrisons with a degree of organization among the notoriously fractious tribes that was unprecedented at that time in the history of British rule. The Hadda Mulla did not order the tribes, but instead adroitly implicated honor and greater tribal solidarity to the cause of Islam as the only ideology that was able to unite the disparate social polities under a common flag.<sup>69</sup> The Hadda Mulla coordinated the tribal uprisings that took place in the summer of 1897; they stretched from Bajaur Agency to Orakzai Agency and included Swat from his headquarters in Mohmand Agency. He utilized his *shaykhs* and *talibs* as the conduits in his communication network to achieve this unity of action among the tribes. The Political Agent in Malakand at the time gave these disciples credit for playing a critical role in rousing the tribes to *jihad* and creating uneasiness in the FATA. The uprising ultimately failed based on the nature of the tribal *lashkar*. The *lashkar* is a highly effective fighting organization when the battle is mobile, but faltered in the stagnant nature of attempting to siege the British cantonments away from their territory and supplies.<sup>70</sup> Although the British prevailed from the well-supplied cantonments and significant reinforcements from inside India, the *mullahs* sent a message that lingering in the FATA would not go uncontested.

Winston Churchill was in Malakand during the tribal uprisings in 1897. Churchill attributed the “predilection of the illiterate tribes for taking rumors at face value” as creating the possibility for whispers of holy war breathed into a race of “intensely passionate and fanatical” people to transform a slightly crazed malcontent into a “mighty man who had risen to lead” the tribes. He saw the Mulla’s efforts in organizing the tribes as a battle for the “soul of India” pitting the march of civilization against ignorance and superstition.<sup>71</sup> Churchill’s opinions were not entirely off the mark, but the Hadda Mulla was more concerned with keeping Islam pure and consolidating his network of religious leaders in the region mutually agreed to be autonomous by the Afghans and British. The Hadda Mulla resisted the Afghan monarchy’s attempts to exert influence in the FATA as well, although not under the banner of *jihad*. The Hadda Mulla was not the first *mullah*

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<sup>69</sup> Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*, 178, 191–192.

<sup>70</sup> Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*, 194–197.

<sup>71</sup> Edwards, *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*, 178, 180.

to call various tribes to jihad and he would not be the last, but his *pirimuridi* line would inhabit the FATA and slowly contribute to the erosion of Sufism and its institutions through revisionist teachings.<sup>72</sup>

Haji Sahib Turangzai was significant in firmly establishing the Hadda Mulla's line in the FATA. Before studying under the Hadda Mulla, Turangzai had two significant experiences that shaped his religious understanding. First, he studied at the Darul Uloom in Deoband and developed a deep friendship with the chancellor and ultimately travelled to Mecca to perform *haj* with members from the Deobandi school. While in Mecca, he met Haji Imdadullah, a member of the wahhabi movement, and took *bait* at his hand. Turangzai promised to promote revivalism and opposition to the British in the spirit of Sayyid Ahmed's mission.<sup>73</sup> Turangzai would later take *bait* at the hand of Hadda Mulla and move to the FATA in 1914 with others from the *pirimuridi* line of the Hadda Mulla to serve the "socially and culturally distinct" tribal areas of Pashtun society.<sup>74</sup> Resistance to British occupation near the FATA would continue after the Third Anglo-Afghan War and throughout the 1920s the *mullahs* and tribes of the FATA would continue to consolidate their autonomy from Afghanistan and the British infused with Islamic revivalist tendencies as a result of the Hadda Mulla's teachings.

The Hadda Mulla's influence in the tribal revolt of 1897 was significant in that it contributed to the British carving out the settled areas of the NWFP into the writ of the central government in 1901. At the same time Dir, Chitral, Swat and the FATA were left semi-autonomous and subject to the FCR due in part to the complexities presented by the tribes and their response to religiously inspired militancy. These complexities combined with the same strategic calculus relative to the Russians further convinced the British that conquering the FATA was not necessary. Islamist militancy would nevertheless remain a

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<sup>72</sup> The *pirimuridi* line describes the relationship between *pir* as teacher and the *murid* as disciple in Sufi tradition. It is ironic that the Sufi relationship was used to describe a network that was undermining Sufi tradition.

<sup>73</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 55. *Bait* is a pledge at the hand of a spiritual teacher and was a concept later used by Osama Bin Laden and others to promote loyalty among Islamic terrorist networks.

<sup>74</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 64.

factor in the frontier as the British continued to seek a balance between controlling the settled districts and keeping the frontier at arms length to achieve relative security in the Indus River Valley. The Faqir of Ipi would rise from the Hadda Mulla line in 1936 to challenge heightened British retaliations and encroachment onto tribal tradition as well as remain politically active in keeping the tribes of the FATA autonomous during Partition.

### **C. THE FAQIR OF IPI AND CONTINUED RESISTANCE**

The British Empire began to retrench in the early twentieth century to combat a rising Germany closer to home and their consolidation of assets was hastened following the catastrophic effects of World War I. Nonetheless, they retained their interest in the commercial benefits of India. The Third Anglo-Afghan War led to reduced dispersion in the frontier, but the British were continually plagued by annoying tribal uprisings for the remainder of their rule in India. Cultural encroachment into the frontier fueled further religiously inspired resistance and the frontier was used for political leverage from the center for various political agendas leading up to partition

#### **1. The Third Anglo-Afghan War and the Modified Forward Policy**

The only change in the implementation of violence during British rule was in the escalation of force caused by improvements in the weapons available. The Pashtun benefitted from the Persian gunrunning trade that could bring better rifles to the FATA by circumventing British controlled areas.<sup>75</sup> Additionally the British implemented machine guns and aircraft in suppressing the tribes following World War I. The Royal Air Force was instrumental in dispersing tribal lashkars attempting to form in order to attack British cantonments throughout the 1920s and 30s.

The last serious threat directly caused by Afghanistan occurred in 1919 after General Dyer's Gurkhas opened fired on a protest staged in Amritsar in the Punjab killing 379 civilians and wounding 1200 more. The new Afghan King Amanullah acted to

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<sup>75</sup> Richards, Haroon, and Edwards all give accounts of the uprisings led by the Hadda Mulla, Haji Sahib Turangzai, and the Faqir of Ipi and the various influences by the Afghan government in attempting to resist British influence in the tribal areas. These influences included the transit of weapons to the tribes of the FATA.

distract questions about his legitimacy domestically by proposing to take Peshawar under the call for jihad in response to the shootings in Amritsar. The British defeated the Afghan encroachment within the year leading to the Treaty of Rawalpindi and marking the end of the Anglo-Afghan Wars. Notably the treaty reaffirmed the Durand Line, but also relinquished the British right to control Afghan foreign policy.<sup>76</sup> After the Third Anglo-Afghan War the British switched to the Modified Forward Policy, which involved consolidating British troops in larger cantonments and using more *khassadars* to police the frontier resulting in relatively reduced violence due to reduced presence. The *khassadars* were local tribesmen paid to perform “watch and ward” duties including securing roads and intercepting tribal raids on the British cantonments.<sup>77</sup> The British hoped that if they left the tribes of the FATA alone, they would leave them alone, but that is not what happened.

## **2. Political Use of Islamic Groups in the Frontier**

The 1920s saw an increasing involvement from Indian political parties in the frontier area as a result of the Khilafat movement and the Jamiat Ulama-i Hind organization of the Deobandis extending their reach in the form of the Jamiat Ulama-i Sarhad. The Khudai Khidmatgar or “Red Shirts” were established locally under Ghaffar Khan and with the Jamiat Ulama-i Sarhad were a source of Pashtun nationalism influenced by Gandhi’s theory of peaceful non-cooperation. These groups were based in the NWFP and were only relevant within the provincial borders as they viewed the tribes of the FATA as having “no interest in economics, industry, agriculture or education” and as being too immersed “in custom and ritual and occupied in the realm of militancy.”<sup>78</sup> This however did not prevent ideas from spreading into the FATA to include the passing of the Sarda Act in 1927, a piece of legislation dictating minimum marrying ages throughout the British Raj. This act, seen as foreign meddling in tribal tradition, as well as the politics of the time seeking to exclude the FATA, including allowances, resulted in

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<sup>76</sup> D.S. Richards, *The Savage Frontier: A History of the Anglo-Afghan Wars* (London, UK: Macmillan London Ltd., 1990), 158, 168.

<sup>77</sup> Noor-ul Haq, “Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan,” 21.

<sup>78</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 155–157, quote on 157.

a series of uprisings led by *mullahs* in 1930 from Mohmand to South Waziristan that at one point threatened Peshawar. The British heightened their response to such actions and used the Royal Air Force to bomb and kill thousands of tribesmen, which succeeded in dispersing the *lashkars* of up to 7,000 men in some areas. Haroon noted the significance of the locality and involvement of politics in the perception of these actions:

These events had injected a greater credibility into the threat posed by the mullas because it appeared that the centre of discontent was no longer the independent territories or Afghanistan – rather it seemed the inspiration for mobilization could come from within India by the activities of the Congress party assisted by an unscrupulous campaign of lies and exaggeration to excite religious fanaticism.<sup>79</sup>

The conflict in 1930 set the stage for the Faqir of Ipi's actions in 1936 and 1937 in response to additional legislation going against tribal tradition and the development of Islamist political parties from the center seeking influence in the frontier. The uprisings in 1936 and 1937 combined with penetration of the frontier by these Islamist groups from the center ultimately contributed to the push for Pakistan as called for in the Lahore Resolution as well as Pakistan following in British footsteps and leaving the FATA autonomous and relying on less costly means of influencing the tribes.

### **3. The Faqir of Ipi**

Mirza Ali of Ipi received his religious education in the Hadda Mulla line and was later somewhat influenced by the khilafatists in India before settling as the Faqir of Ipi in the Tochi Valley in Bannu district. In 1936, a dispute arose over a Hindu girl who had allegedly converted to Islam and married a Pashun in Bannu. The girl's parents accused the man of abducting their daughter and cited the marriage as unlawful according to the Sarda Act due to the girl being a minor; however, the girl refused to return to her parents. A government investigation found no evidence for abduction or legal consent to marry and ruled that the girl would remain with a third party until she was of age and then she could decide her own fate. The Muslim community in Bannu saw the decision as

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<sup>79</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 164.

favoritism by the government for “the Hindu Community over the Muslim one.”<sup>80</sup> The Faqir was among those angered and called a *jirga* to gain support for his *jihad* from other *mullahs* in the tribal areas. In November of 1936, the Faqir attacked a British military force moving into the Tochi Valley with a 2,000-man *lashkar* and forced the British to retreat. The victory brought another 1,200 men to the Faqir from Waziristan and readied him for more violence after the winter had passed.<sup>81</sup>

Despite attempted payoffs to the *maliks* of the Tochi Valley by the British, the Faqir had mustered up to 4,000 men from at least four tribes in the spring of 1937. The British would again use their Royal Air Force to disperse the *jihad* and mitigate the penetration of the Faqir’s movement east. The motivations of the warriors fighting with the Faqir probably ranged from defending autonomy to the spoils of raids and the possibility of target practice against the British army. Once autonomy was again relatively secure and the prospects for gaining wealth made difficult by the Royal Air Force, the movement was ceased. However the events of 1936 and 1937 led by a “*mullah*” in reaction to a judgment concerning one woman increased British fear that “the Tribal Areas policy could only partly contain and regulate human action” as if anymore proof was needed at that point.<sup>82</sup> The British applied pressure on the tribes to hand over the Faqir of Ipi, but his popularity and mystique allowed him to avoid capture although he was forced to keep his actions smaller and reduced to annoying raids until just after Partition due to the increasing trend in British policy of using disproportionate force in dealing with the tribes.

The importance of the discussion of the Faqir is the similarity to what we see today with the Afghan Taliban, Al Qaeda leadership, and the TTP in their ability to maintain safe haven in the FATA and surrounding area at least until very recently. The people may or may not be in agreement with the militants, but the populations’ perception is that the threat from the militants is greater due to proximity. The Pakistani

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<sup>80</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 168.

<sup>81</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 169.

<sup>82</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 170.

government's operations in the FATA in 2002, 2004, and 2006 were similar to the British in that they violently imposed their will and then left the areas to be reoccupied by the Islamist militants. The British could afford to accept the violence generated on their western periphery, but Pakistan can no longer ignore the increased threat posed by the successors to the Hadda Mulla and Faqir of Ipi.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

Britain fought two wars in Afghanistan to limit Russian influence in South Asia and prevent any move on India. Strategically, these efforts succeeded in stopping Russia at the Amu Darya River despite tactical failures in dealing with a complex Afghan power structure. Britain did enough to maintain the Durand Line as a buffer from Russian encroachment into Central Asia. For a variety of reasons, the Soviets never pushed far enough south during British rule to cause them to need to occupy and more fully control the tribes in the FATA, so they did not. The British faced numerous violent uprisings in the tribal areas, often inspired by charismatic *mullahs* calling for *jihād*, but they never threatened the vital interests in greater British India.

The history of British colonialism in the frontier was marked by using the stick time and again to punish large uprisings and then falling back to attempt the carrot in paying the tribes to be peaceful. In Waziristan alone, the British suffered over 1,822 raids from the Mehsud and Wazir tribes into the Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan Districts from 1910 to 1942.<sup>83</sup> Throughout the FATA, the British essentially paid the tribes to leave British interests alone with sporadic success without asking anything in return other than the opportunity for medals of valor for military personnel serving here during the many conflicts. Pax Britannica never really extended outside of government property and 100 meters off either side of the main roads. The British never controlled the FATA because they never found a deliberate, sustained effort worth the cost when they could garner the benefits derived from the Indus River valley without putting forth the men and material.

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<sup>83</sup> Noor ul Haq, "Northwest Tribal Belt of Pakistan," 27 and Appendix IV on page 74.



A senior British official commenting specifically on Waziristan, but summing up the whole colonial period in the FATA, simply stated, “what a record of futility it all is!”<sup>84</sup> There is no doubt that locally, futility is exactly what was felt by those tasked with duty on the frontier; however, the overall effort was far from futile as the actions taken to punish and appease the tribal belt protected the crown jewel for over a century. *Jihad* against the British was definitely a forbearer of the fight against the Soviets and today’s conflicts, but greater geopolitical concerns are what kept the British from occupying and controlling the FATA, and ultimately abandoning the frontier and leaving it to Pakistan altogether. The British aphorism for their policy in the Northwest of “rule the Punjabis, intimidate the Sindhis, buy the Pashtun, and honour the Baluch” seems to be a policy that Pakistan would revisit in the next half-century.<sup>85</sup> The next chapter will provide analysis of the perceptions of Pakistani leadership toward the FATA, the geopolitical context that drove them to retain the policy of leaving the FATA semi-autonomous, and the evolution of Islamic militancy into a tool of the state.

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<sup>84</sup> Ahmed, *Resistance and Control in Pakistan: Revised Edition*, 32–33.

<sup>85</sup> Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 144.

## IV. PAKISTAN AND THE FATA

Just after midnight on August 15, 1947, the British lowered the “Union Jack, emblazoned with the Star of India,” from the flagpole at the Viceroy’s House in New Delhi and ushered in the independence of one-fifth of the population of the world.<sup>86</sup> The push for Indian independence that began in 1857 reached its culmination with a bloody Partition of the subcontinent into Pakistan and India.<sup>87</sup> Mohammad Ali Jinnah espoused his two nation theory in 1940 through the Lahore Resolution that demanded the creation of a nation where the “Muslims of British India would be permitted to lead their lives according to their political, social, and religious culture.”<sup>88</sup> The challenge for Jinnah was that the Muslims of India desired independence for differing reasons depending on if they were a peasant from Bengal, an urban worker from Delhi, or a landowner in what is today Pakistan. Additionally, Jinnah had to contend with the fact that not all Muslims were in favor of dividing India. Significantly, the Muslims of Northwest British India wanted an Islamic state to serve as a “safe haven for the followers of Islam” with a government guided by the Quran.<sup>89</sup> The ultimate vision of Pakistan was just forming when administrators and security personnel had to deal with the very practical issues of people and materials. Partition pushed six million people out of Pakistan and eight million Muslims from India into Pakistan during the largest migration of refugees experienced in history. Additionally, officials attempted to divide the territory and assets into “bundles of 82.5 percent for India and 17.5 percent for Pakistan” including civic infrastructure, the armed forces and their equipment, money, and methods of transport.<sup>90</sup> The animosity caused by the division of British India has created a shadow that has to date prevented stability on the subcontinent.

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<sup>86</sup> Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (London, UK: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997), xi.

<sup>87</sup> Casualty figures are uncertain, but somewhere around 500,000 people were killed or died as a result of the massive population migrations caused by Partition.

<sup>88</sup> Shahid Javed Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>89</sup> Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, 10.

<sup>90</sup> Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 367.

The following chapter will address the changing perspective that various Pakistani administrations had concerning the FATA, the geopolitical context that shaped their policies, and the growing role that political Islam would assume in influencing Pakistan's strategies toward the region. The pervasive shadow of Pakistan's security dilemma with India has remained a constant, but the U.S., Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union, China, Iran, and Afghanistan were major players that contributed to ultimately destabilizing the FATA in attempting to achieve their national interests. JI and JUI emerged from Partition as the two major Islamic political parties that have shaped the role of violent radicalism while maintaining small, legitimate roles within the political system. The chapter will consider these factors and how they shaped policy toward the FATA through the lens of the post-Partition era, the PPP administration of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the military rule of General Zia ul-Haq, and the post-Zia democracies that resulted in supporting the Taliban. The trend observed is a cascading effect of increasingly supporting militancy in the form of radical Islamism in an effort to achieve national interests in relation to India and Afghanistan that has now turned on the state.

#### **A. THE FATA FOLLOWING PARTITION**

The FATA and Balochistan were least influenced by the migrations following Partition. The tribes of the FATA were also politically removed from the concerns growing between India and Pakistan over the new international border and the questionable status of Kashmir. Jinnah and subsequent leaders were rightfully far more concerned with establishing the validity of the idea of Pakistan as a Muslim state than changing the convenience of maintaining the status quo in the FATA due to the significant geographic and cultural challenges caused by the separation between East and West Pakistan as well as the diversity among the people of West Pakistan itself. The immediate conflict in Kashmir in 1947 and the subsequent war in 1965 kept the majority of Pakistan's military and political effort focused east on their rivalry with India. Pakistan did not need trouble in the west, so they initially kept the peace and secured the loyalty of the Pashtun tribes the only way they new how . . . by continuing to pay them for good behavior. Afghanistan was a pervasive annoyance in attempting to undermine

this effort, but without having a better deal to offer the tribes, their intentions were little more than rhetoric that could be handled diplomatically for the first couple of decades. A few of the Pashtun tribes helped their cause immediately by mobilizing in support of the Muslims in Kashmir and gave Jinnah reason to reinforce their autonomy.

### **1. Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India**

The first use of the tribes of the FATA to promote militancy on behalf of Pakistani national interests occurred almost immediately after the state's creation. Just two months after Partition, as the Pakistan Government was busy building up an administration from scratch with no armed forces to speak of at their disposal, the First Kashmir War broke out involving the fate of a majority Muslim state ruled by a Hindu prince. Tribesmen from the FATA, specifically Wazirs, Mehsuds, and Afridis, invaded Kashmir spurred on with food, fuel, money, and equipment by the Muslim League to help decide the fate of their fellow Muslims.<sup>91</sup> Mohammad Ali Jinnah's involvement in using the tribes of the FATA in this conflict is uncertain, but the benefits gained from their help no doubt shaped his initial sentiment toward the tribes. During his first visit to Peshawar to address the tribal elders in 1948, Jinnah affirmed that Pakistan "had no desire to interfere in their internal freedom; rather it wanted to put them on their legs through educational, economic and social uplift as self-respecting citizens, who have the opportunities of fully developing and producing what is best" in their land. Notably he also promised to continue paying allowances as long as they remained faithful and loyal to Pakistan.<sup>92</sup> Pakistan's eyes were fixed on the problems created with India over Partition and pursued policies toward the FATA very similar to the British almost as a default response instead of tackling integration into the new democratic Islamic state.

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<sup>91</sup> L. F. Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan* (London, UK: Faber and Faber, 1962), 78. There is much more to this story, but the important aspect is that tribal actions shaped Jinnah's initial rhetoric the following year.

<sup>92</sup> Rashid Ahmed Khan, "FATA after Independence: 1947–2001," *Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, ed. Dr Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2005), 28.

Afghanistan would also play a role with Indian monetary aid in not allowing the frontier to integrate into Pakistan. The Indian Congress Party had been very active and held considerable sway in the NWFP beginning in the 1920s. Their agenda was to promote sentiment toward a unified India among the tribes of the NWFP by promising an equal role in the eventual government. As mentioned earlier, the Khudai Khidmatgar or “Red Shirts” were established locally under Ghaffar Khan and were a proponent of Pashtun nationalism influenced by Gandhi’s theory of peaceful non-cooperation. The Congress Party was not happy about the immediate deterioration of Indo-Pakistan relations and “Indian money joined Afghan money in fomenting the campaign for an independent Pathan State among all who could be induced to listen.”<sup>93</sup> All Pashtuns including those in the FATA were very interested in independence; however, Jinnah had already assured their autonomy including subsidies so their loyalty would remain intact to Pakistan as long as the deal held.

The Pashtun loyalty did not stop Afghanistan’s arguments of the invalidity of the Durand Line and the demand for a Pashtun state as soon as Partition became inevitable. A plebiscite was held on July 20, 1947 allowing the Pashtuns in the frontier to choose between India and Pakistan. Pakistan received an overwhelming victory of 289,244 to 2,874, but the results were contested on two grounds. First, only 55.5% of the electorate voted due to the Khudai Khidmatgar boycotting because they wanted a unified India or independence for the NWFP. Second, Afghanistan argued that the option to be a part of Afghanistan or the creation of an independent state including all Pashtuns was not offered.<sup>94</sup> Afghanistan formalized their rejection of Pakistan by voicing the only negative vote of admittance to the United Nations and began pushing for the state of Pashtunistan as a means to extend their influence to the east. Afghanistan’s arguments, although incompatible, were clearly geared toward pulling the Pashtuns in Pakistan into their sphere of influence. If the Durand Line were not the international border, then they wanted all Pashtuns to be a part of Afghanistan, but in arguing for a Pashtunistan they

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<sup>93</sup> Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, 73.

<sup>94</sup> S.M.M. Qureshi, “Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute Between Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *Pacific Affairs* 39, no. 1/2 (Spring/Summer 1966), 104–107.

would be legitimizing the Durand Line or ceding some of their territory to the new state, which was not their intention.<sup>95</sup> The argument for Pashtunistan has remained a quiet roar, but Pakistan's benign neglect of the FATA did not give the autonomous tribes a reason to request independence and the loss of their allowances. At the same time, Pakistan pursued no policies that would mitigate their autonomy to produce real integration into the central government.

## **2. British Policies Continued**

Administration of the FATA changed very little as the Indian Independence Act abrogated all special treaties with the frontier prior to Partition in June of 1947. Jinnah decided not to base troops in the region after 200 tribal elders signed an instrument of accession to Pakistan in return for continued subsidies. Local administration still fell to the Political Agents but his mandate was broadened to include overseeing development projects through his Agency Councilors and Assistant Political Agents. The FATA did not receive as much funding or attention as the settled districts, therefore many of the human rights concerns, education reforms, and poverty reduction were never addressed. The FCR remained the law of the land and the new constitution only allowed one representative from the FATA initially into the National Assembly. The constitution of 1973 increased this number to eight out of 342 seats in the National Assembly, but these representatives were chosen from 35,000 of the maliks as adult franchise was not granted to all until 1997.<sup>96</sup> The difference in representation is understandable given the history and difference in administration. As Wayne Wilcox asked, "when the social fabric of the state is stable only at the cost of economic inequity in favor of a warlike minority, how can majority rule function?"<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Qureshi, "Pakhtunistan: The Frontier Dispute Between Afghanistan and Pakistan," 110.

<sup>96</sup> Khan, "FATA after Independence: 1947-2001," 44; Shinwari, *Understanding FATA: Attitudes Towards Governance, Religion & Society in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas*, 17-18. The new constitution in 1973 was necessitated by the separation of Bangladesh from West Pakistan.

<sup>97</sup> Wayne Ayres Wilcox, *Pakistan: The Consolidation of a Nation* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1963), 155.

Pakistan continued to leave this “warlike minority” for the most part legally and economically autonomous due to the constant conflict on their eastern border with India. The Second Kashmir War in 1965 and India’s relative success against the Pakistani military only drove Pakistan to further strengthen their defenses against potential Indian offensive action toward the Punjab corridor. The decision to leave East Pakistan only lightly defended further “stoked the embers” of Bengali sub-nationalism that would lead to the third Indo-Pakistani War six years later. The secessionist movement in Bangladesh and crushing defeat of the Pakistani Army brought into question Islam as the lone reason for nation building in South Asia as was called for in Jinnah’s “two-nation theory”, which propounded that “the Muslims and Hindus of South Asia constituted two distinct, primordial nations.”<sup>98</sup> The Bengalis and East Pakistan were a cultural and geographic challenge to the Pakistani Government, but the symbolic blow to the idea of the Muslim state was what could not be repeated anywhere in West Pakistan without delegitimizing the entire nation. Islam increasingly established itself in the politics of Pakistan as a means to create contagion in the country despite the cultural differences between the Baloch, Pashtun, Sindhis, and Punjabis.

### **3. Origins of JI and JUI and Continued Activism by the *Mullahs***

The Partition of British India briefly changed the nature of religious activism in the FATA by removing the infidel threat. More importantly, the debates surrounding what Partition would look like led to the formation of the two most important Islamist political movements in Pakistan, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI). JI was formed in August of 1941 by Maulana Abul Ala Mawdudi to rival the Muslim League, which he viewed as a secular party, for leadership in creating a Muslim state.<sup>99</sup> JI was an organization designed to institutionalize a movement of Islamic renewal among Muslims by creating a devout vanguard of technocrats and activists from the educated

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<sup>98</sup> Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001), 47–48, 71–72. Bangladesh is a majority Muslim nation which some would argue does not discredit the two-nation theory, nevertheless Pakistan’s claim to being the Muslim State of South Asia was severely discredited by the 1971 war.

<sup>99</sup> Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, “Mawdudi and the Jama’at-i Islami: The Origins, Theory and Practice of Islamic Revivalism,” *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, ed. Ali Rahnema (2006), 111.

middle class of Pakistan's urban centers. In contrast, JUI was pro-Muslim league when it split from Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind and their support of the Indian National Congress in 1945. JUI found its constituency from a rural support base and the clerical classes, but like JI, had limited influence in the frontier at Partition.<sup>100</sup>

Although small numerically, JI's educated vanguard was particularly influential in the first decade of Pakistan's history in putting forth the vision of an ideal state with Sharia as its legal code and government serving as an Islamic institution vice a secular master. Mawdudi wanted Islam to work from the outside-in, but once Pakistan was created, argued that social and individual reformation was impossible without an Islamic state structure. Mawdudi and JI's efforts were successful in shaping the first constitution in 1956 through an annex called the Objectives Resolution that stated among other things that sovereignty belongs to Allah alone, but He has delegated it to Pakistan to be exercised within the limits prescribed by Him.<sup>101</sup> However, when Pakistan's first military ruler, Ayub Khan, assumed power in 1958, he immediately banned political parties and marginalized the Islamists in an attempt to modernize and further secularize the state. JI's confrontation with the martial state during the 1960s would later shape its' interaction with the military and bureaucratic elite of Zia's regime. Mawdudi began to blame the Americans for Pakistan's problems as early as 1960 when stating that the U.S. "does not want Muslim nations to remain Muslim" and that they "support dictatorships against democracy" due to their policies being "possessed by the devil called Jewry."<sup>102</sup> These comments sound familiar to similar expressions of Pakistani resentment toward the U.S. found today in the FATA and throughout Pakistan. JUI took a back seat to the Muslim League following Partition and would not become as influential in shaping politics until the 1970s.

In the FATA, Partition brought the question of the status of the tribes back to the forefront of regional politics. As stated previously, Afghanistan saw the creation of an

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<sup>100</sup> Joshua T. White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier: Islamic Politics and U.S. Policy in Pakistan's North-West Frontier* (Arlington, VA: Center on Faith and International Affairs, 2008), 25–26.

<sup>101</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*, 27, 42.

<sup>102</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*, 28.



independent Muslim nation that included the Pashtun border region as a challenge to ethnic ties and its claim to be the only free Islamic state at the time. The Durand Line remained in question as no deal was ever made between Pakistan and Afghanistan and the British agreement in 1893 had only loosely been followed anyway. The Faqir of Ipi came back into the picture at this time by claiming that the unity of the tribes of the FATA was more important than the unity of Islam in a bid for personal power. Others that supported the Deobandis and Khudai Khidmatgars were equally disappointed and the idea of a Pashtunistan was given fuel internally by the *mullahs* to the great concern of the Muslim League. Ironically, the tribes from the FATA fought most vigorously to liberate Kashmir from the Hindus; however, it must be recognized that they probably fought more to acquire the booty from war in Kashmir than for true Islamic solidarity. Containing the influential *mullahs* was part of the reason Jinnah promptly thanked the tribesman and promised to remove all garrisons from the FATA, continue the provision of allowances to the tribes, and allow them to maintain their autonomy.<sup>103</sup> He really had few other choices at the time due to severely constrained assets. The idea of Pashtunistan remained a part of Afghan rhetoric, but with autonomy promised, the Faqir's ambition to be the head of a Pashtun state lost momentum.

It appeared to the FATA's political administrators and the Afghans that *mullahs* were the instigators in voicing opinions that sought to keep the Pashtun tribal culture separate and attempted to undermine the authority of the Punjab province centered nation state. Haroon notes that with Partition emerged a "persistent truth-that, as during the colonial period, the claims put forward by religious leaders were not for union" with any state, "but for greater regional autonomy and recognition of their own positions as leaders among the tribes."<sup>104</sup> These observations ring true today with the irredentist agendas being put forward by the TTP in a bid to secure their hold on power in the frontier.

Prior to the 1971 war with India over East Pakistan, Pakistan was consumed with attempting to create and stabilize a country and a government. Rightfully, their concern

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<sup>103</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 176–188.

<sup>104</sup> Haroon, *Frontier of Faith: Islam in the Indo-Afghan Borderland*, 193.

was on their security dilemma with India and economic and electoral power sharing with the Bengalis. The FATA was seen as a less pressing issue and Islamist militancy was relatively dormant as the role of Islam in the state of Pakistan was still being defined. The annexation of Bangladesh forced Pakistan to seek solidarity from its remaining four provinces and increase dependency from the FATA to promote loyalty. Following the 1971 war, Zulfikar Bhutto remained focused on India, but was forced to give more attention to the frontier in order to prevent any more territory undermining the “raison d’être” of Pakistan as a state for Muslims on the subcontinent.<sup>105</sup>

## **B. 1971–1977**

Internally, the 1971 war was caused by a failure by Islamabad’s ability to respond to the needs of East Pakistan and inflexibility in negotiating to accommodate their democratically elected party’s agenda. India overcame fears of Chinese intervention to support the Bengali resistance and ultimately intervened to help create Bangladesh in order to eliminate the refugee crisis caused by Pakistani military crackdowns and remove a hostile Pakistani military presence to their east.<sup>106</sup> Following the embarrassing defeat of Pakistan and the capture of over 90,000 soldiers in less than a month, Yahya Khan resigned and ceded the Presidency to Zulfikar Bhutto in order to avoid another coup and in response to public outrage at the loss of East Pakistan. Bhutto began his presidency with a new sense of urgency in maintaining and shoring up the territorial integrity of Pakistan and reestablishing Pakistan’s diminished power in its security dilemma with India. The frontier began to be leveraged toward this end under the Bhutto administration and, once again, loyalty and peace in the FATA was more important than integration.

### **1. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto**

Lawrence Ziring claims that Bhutto, in his role as deputy Prime Minister, could have prevented the war, but chose not to do so because he believed the “nation was better

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<sup>105</sup> Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, 223.

<sup>106</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 62–64.

served by the secession of East Pakistan.”<sup>107</sup> Regardless, after the liberation of East Pakistan into Bangladesh, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) desired to make the western frontier and interests in Kashmir secure. In order to do this, many development projects were launched in the FATA from 1972 until 1977 and, through bilateral engagement with India, a new line of control was established in Kashmir and India agreed to pull its forces back from territory seized during the 1971 war. Despite these projects, no attempt was made to change the FCR or Political Agent system and taxation was never in question due to the need for loyalty on the border. In order to understand why both of these efforts would eventually fail, understanding the geopolitical context in which Bhutto and Pakistan found itself is essential.

Bhutto saw his role as Chairman being similar to that of Mao’s in China and his socialist PPP as having much more in common with the communist nations of the world than the U.S. Additionally, the U.S.’s ambivalent actions during the wars in 1965 and 1971 combined with the arms embargo against Pakistan led Bhutto to believe he needed to distance himself from Washington. At the same time, U.S. and China relations were improving and the Soviet Union wanted to get closer to India as a counterpoint to U.S. influence in the area. Therefore, the Soviets played on India’s lingering sense of humiliation following the 1962 Sino-Indian War to provide military equipment to India in order to improve their international image by “having a large, democratic, Third World state as a quasi-ally.”<sup>108</sup> India jumped at the chance to have protection from further Chinese aggression. The Soviet and Indian alliance only pushed China closer to Pakistan and a few years later was a contributing factor to substantial U.S. aid following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The loss of Bangladesh also drove Bhutto to pull away from SEATO and other Southeast Asian concerns and to seek to strengthen his ties in CENTO with the Middle Eastern countries.<sup>109</sup> The 1973 constitution even stated that Pakistan would “endeavor to

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<sup>107</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 134.

<sup>108</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 72–73.

<sup>109</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crossroads of History*, 136.

preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on Islamic identity.”<sup>110</sup> Bhutto sought to strengthen his ties to the Muslim world by hosting an Islamic Summit Conference in 1974 in Lahore attended by King Faisal, Anwar al-Sadat, Hafiz al-Assad, Muammar Qaddafi, and Yasser Arafat. During the conference, he avoided the topic of Kashmir and chose to attack Israel and show solidarity with the Palestinians in a veiled attempt to get the Muslim world involved with the Kashmir issue. Later that same year, India shocked the world when they detonated a nuclear device. Bhutto took this opportunity to tap into his new network of friends to call for an “Islamic bomb” to level the playing field with the Communists, Christians, and Hindus.<sup>111</sup> Regionally, Bhutto also leveraged the Shah of Iran to help him influence the politics of the Durand Line with Afghanistan. Notably, the closer relationship with the Muslim world allowed many Islamist organizations to begin penetrating and growing the number of madrassas in Pakistan, which would influence the domestic landscape in the years to come. Bhutto’s vision of himself as “a great international figure and the major political personality in the Islamic world” drove him to seek supreme leadership in Pakistan at the cost of domestic stability.<sup>112</sup>

Domestically, Bhutto restructured the economy, improved the public sector, and established constitutional consensus among different political players. The remarkably dynamic improvements in the country could have been finished and lasted had it not been for the serious character flaws Bhutto demonstrated in seeking to stay in power.<sup>113</sup> Bhutto ultimately abandoned his socialist program and ideology in favor of individual survival and after a 1974 altercation over political appointments with J.A. Rahim, the true founder of the PPP, the socialist aspects of Bhutto’s regime were never the same. The altruism of the social and economic reforms was derailed without the participation of the leftist thinking original leaders and Bhutto’s aristocratic roots began to show in his desire

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<sup>110</sup> Shahid Javed Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 47.

<sup>111</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crossroads of History*, 138–139, 152.

<sup>112</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, 135.

<sup>113</sup> Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, 45.

to keep power.<sup>114</sup> In the frontier, Bhutto's desire to repress political dissent would emerge in Balochistan and the NWFP, the two provinces without a PPP majority.

The PPP's socialist agenda upset the traditional power relationships in Balochistan and the NWFP where the leadership saw social reform as intrusive. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Kahn Bizenjo, the Balochi Governor, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his son, Wali Khan, were all outspoken against Bhutto's policies. Wali Khan even took to describing the Prime Minister as "Adolph Bhutto." Bhutto perceived the collusion as "forming a Pashtun-Balochi alliance, with assistance provided by Kabul, New Delhi, and their superpower mentor, the Soviet Union."<sup>115</sup> Bhutto, unable to tolerate dissent, ordered General Tikka Khan to undertake a protracted war with the militants of the Baloch Liberation Front, which would end up forcing the Balochi tribesman to retreat and find refuge in the mountains between Pakistan and Afghanistan in the southern frontier. Balochistan, unlike the FATA, had to remain firmly within the writ of the state because of the emerging potential for natural resources and the need for another warm water port further from influence by the Indian Navy as a result of the blockade of Karachi during the 1971 war. These actions would ultimately contribute to undermining the social and economic initiative begun in the FATA under Bhutto's regime.

The PPP's agenda in trying to improve the FATA was rooted in Bhutto's initial attempts to redefine Pakistan and solidify loyalty. The schemes to develop irrigation systems, construct new schools and colleges, improve roads, build textile mills, and attempts to generate electricity were all embarked upon to win the "hearts and minds" of the tribes. The Interior Ministry exerted great effort in keeping the tribes informed of the execution of these development projects as well as reinforcing their territorial integrity in order to maintain the FATA's loyalty as they condemned Afghanistan for revisiting the idea of Pashtunistan.<sup>116</sup> Bhutto's diplomatic efforts along these lines were successful in persuading King Zahir Shah and his reformed government in dropping the issue of Pashtunistan. However, when Mohammed Daud Khan came back to power in

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<sup>114</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, 148.

<sup>115</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, 142, 146.

<sup>116</sup> Khan, "FATA after Independence: 1947–2001," 39.

Afghanistan following the coup in 1973, Bhutto saw territorial integrity as a serious issue again. Bhutto would ultimately use Islamist dissent in Afghanistan to address the territorial issue.

## **2. Zulfiqar Bhutto and JUI**

The more populist rhetoric of the PPP resonated with the constituency of JUI and led to a Tripartite Agreement in 1972 that brought JUI to power in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) as the first Islamist party to hold a substantial political office in Pakistan. During this time, JI viewed socialism as *kafir* and therefore its influence suffered during the Presidency of Bhutto.<sup>117</sup> The JUI leader, Mufti Mahmud, serving as Chief Minister of NWFP, banned alcohol and reformed the inheritance laws in line with Sharia as part of a vigorous Islamization program in the Province.<sup>118</sup> The Islamist efforts of JUI were somewhat in contrast to Bhutto's development projects in the frontier from 1972 to 1977. The PPP government's efforts to bring more roads, schools, and industry in to the frontier were intended to win over the population as stated previously, but the real motivation was to promote territorial integrity of the frontier tribes and loyalty to Islamabad.<sup>119</sup>

Territorial integrity was an issue because of Mohammad Daud Khan's increased rhetoric and action toward inspiring the Pashtun tribes in Pakistan to push for the creation of an irredentist Pashtunistan. Bhutto reacted by implementing his version of a forward policy in strategically supporting the political Islamist movement that had developed in Afghanistan in the early 1970s led by men such as Burhanuddin Rabbani, Ahmad Shah Masoud, and Gulbadin Hekmatyar. The Afghan Islamists, many of whom established themselves in the frontier in 1973, were opposed to the secular oriented Daud regime and did not support Kabul's policy of Pashtunistan. The Afghan Islamists activated military training camps in North and South Waziristan with support from Islamabad to resist

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<sup>117</sup> *Kafir* here means unIslamic in the same way that JI saw communism and capitalism as no in line with the teachings of the Quran.

<sup>118</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*, 28–29.

<sup>119</sup> Khan, "FATA after Independence: 1947–2001," 39.

Daud. In a trend that would foreshadow the next 30 years of Pakistani state sponsored militancy, Bhutto kept the support of the Afghan Islamists a secret by enlisting them in the Frontier Corps as trainees. The irony of a modernizing, socialist leader backing Islamists against another modernizing leader in Afghanistan demonstrates the truth that ideologies other than religion have found little footing in the realist politics of South Asia. Before Islamabad stopped its assistance due to improved relations with Kabul, the Afghan Islamists had already forged strong links with JI and JUI who were beginning to receive substantial financial aid from Saudi Arabia as a result of Bhutto's Middle Eastern policies.<sup>120</sup> Despite the Islamists links fostered under the Bhutto regime, the Islamist groups in Pakistan had turned away from Bhutto and entered into the coalition in the 1977 elections that sought the removal of the PPP. The questionable elections in 1977 created domestic turmoil that forced General Zia ul-Haq to action despite having been appointed by Bhutto to lead the Army.

Bhutto took no real steps to integrate the FATA for many of the same reasons that leaders before him had failed to take action. He needed a Pashtun population nominally loyal to Pakistan to validate the Muslim state and maintain the idea of Pashtunistan as a strictly Afghan creation. His actions to more closely align Pakistan to the Middle Eastern countries allowed access by wealthy Muslim donors to begin the spread of Wahhabi madrassas in Pakistan that would not boom until Zia's regime. Bhutto's early backing of what would become the mujahideen combined with only moderate social and economic penetration of the FATA set the stage for the conversion of the frontier into a territory beset by 30 years of Islamist insurgency. General Zia accelerated this process as Pakistan found itself thrust into the middle of the Cold War.

### **C. 1978–1994**

General Zia-ul-Haq overthrew the Bhutto regime on July 5, 1977, in the second coup in Pakistan's cyclical political history. Following the coup in Pakistan in 1977, the new leaders, Mohammad Daud and General Zia, continued to reduce tensions and clear

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<sup>120</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 78–81. Between 1973 and 1977, the Pakistani military reportedly trained 5,000 Afghan Islamists resisting the Daud regime.

the way for improved bilateral relations on the Durand Line. However, this progress and any development in the FATA would cease following the Saur Revolution in Afghanistan and the subsequent Soviet invasion, which would permanently change the landscape of the frontier areas beginning in 1979.<sup>121</sup> If Pakistan was even moderately beginning to penetrate the FATA socially and economically, any sustained and deliberate attempt to modernize the FATA was abandoned due to geopolitical actions and domestic turmoil. Two revolutions would shape the trajectory of Zia's rule in Pakistan. The Saur Revolution in Afghanistan in 1978 followed by the Soviet invasion the following year and the Iranian Revolution in 1979 would put Pakistan on a trajectory of Islamization that would spiral out of control in the frontier.

The Soviet invasion forced Zia to view the FATA much like the British as a buffer between the communists and Pakistan. For the Pashtun on both sides of the Durand Line, mobilization against the new infidel was easily framed in the call for *jihad* and the mujahideen quickly became a beacon for the greater Islamist world that had been growing in the post-colonial era. U.S. and Saudi money made keeping the FATA autonomous and allowing the mujahideen to use it as a virtual base profitable. The concept of gaining "strategic depth" against Indian attack began to evolve with the goal of shaping a pliable Pashtun, Islamist ally in Afghanistan that could be leveraged by Pakistan toward Central Asia and Iran as well as its eastern neighbor. Turmoil in the FATA following the Soviet withdrawal stemmed from these ideas and the use of Pakistani and foreign Islamists as the foot soldiers to achieve this goal. Once again, expansion of national interests would move through the FATA by leveraging anarchy instead of attempting to control it.

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<sup>121</sup> Khan, "FATA after Independence: 1947–2001," 40.





Figure 4. Mujahideen

### 1. The Politics of General Zia ul-Haq

The Zia regime was deeply committed to Sunni Islamization in response to the communist threat from Afghanistan and the ideological threat from Iran in inspiring the Shia population of Pakistan. Zia's Islamist political ideas were nested in a martial dictatorship that was shaped by the geopolitical context of the Cold War rivalry and ultimately served to change the frontier drastically. Following the Soviet invasion, Pakistan faced potentially two hostile states on its borders. The Soviet threat to South Asia pushed Pakistan and the U.S. onto converging paths and the relationship would serve immediate U.S. interests, while fostering Pakistan's long-term state sponsorship of violent asymmetric action in Afghanistan, Kashmir, and India.

Zia famously turned down President Jimmy Carter's offer of \$400 million in the form of economic and military assistance by referring to it as "peanuts" in the hope of a better deal from President Ronald Reagan. Reagan obliged with substantial military and economic aid that would be matched by the Saudi's in an effort to contain the Soviets and

their atheist ideology. U.S. military technology going to Pakistan forced India to strengthen its military relationship with the Soviet Union and the combination of these actions kept Indo-U.S. relations strained for much of the 1980s.<sup>122</sup> The increased military capability bolstered the security of Zia's regime and the mujahideen jihad against the Soviets drove Zia's policy towards the FATA to remain hands off as the Afghan Islamists mixed with the Pakistani Pashtun to eliminate any semblance of authority held by the Political Agents in lieu of loose direction from the ISI.

While fighting an asymmetric battle with U.S. and Saudi funds in the frontier, Pakistan and India would clash over Siachen in 1984 and on their border in what is known as Operation Brasstacks in late 1986 and early 1987. The significance of these minor skirmishes was to bring Kashmir back into the fore of the conflict with India and the introduction of a claimed nuclear capability by Pakistan.<sup>123</sup> Amidst these tensions the Karakorum highway was completed, which was a road network that linked China to Pakistan. The Chinese viewed the highway as a way to import oil by a land route through Pakistan; however, the Indian's saw the road as a way for China to resupply Pakistan and attack India along two fronts. Amid these complex regional and geopolitical developments, Zia remained content to profit from anarchy on his western border and was also confronted with much of the same domestic turmoil that plagued Bhutto.

Domestically, Zia viewed secular political parties as "arbitrarily divisive and dysfunctional" as well as incompatible with Islamic teaching and called for *Nizam-i-Mustapha*, a political system harkening back to the rule of the Prophet, to validate not holding elections, banning political parties, and extending martial law.<sup>124</sup> The Islamization of Pakistan's institutions included the army, the courts, the bureaucracy, and most notably the education system. To ensure his regime could endure, Zia promulgated a Provisional Constitutional Order that stated the President could dissolve a group or organization that he deemed was "formed or is operating in a manner prejudicial to the

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<sup>122</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 79–83.

<sup>123</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 83–88. A.Q. Khan famously said Pakistan would use the bomb if its existence was threatened during Brasstacks, which caused the Indians to believe that "Pakistan had crossed an important threshold in its quest for nuclear weapons." 88.

<sup>124</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, 165.

sovereignty, integrity, or security of Pakistan.”<sup>125</sup> He cloaked his dictatorship in Islam in order to cater to the Islamist groups wielding newfound political clout due to their links to the wahhabi salafist Middle Eastern donors funding the *jihad* with substantial portions of the funding going to enhance the Pakistani military. However, the madrassa networks would receive favor in the Zia regime and substantially influence the social and political landscape, specifically in the FATA.

From 1980 onwards, madrassas received almost 10% of the zakat funds that the government collected. These taxes, combined with generous contributions from the Persian Gulf, led to a tripling in the number of madrassas during this time. More importantly, following the Soviet invasion, the “new genre” of madrassas “were equally if not more concerned with *jihad* than with religious scholarship.”<sup>126</sup> Many of these madrassas found a home in the FATA and greater frontier area as a steady stream of refugees from Afghanistan were ready to give their sons to the *jihad* in exchange for the food and shelter provided by the madrassas. The FATA suffered most from the madrassa culture as millions of refugees settled and became influenced by the narrow Islamist vision of uneducated *mullahs* now serving as religious leaders to a disenfranchised youth.<sup>127</sup> JI and JUI now had a growing target audience and a government more in line with their ideology in which to exploit.

## **2. JI and JUI Under Zia**

JI struggled initially in their decision to back Zia due to their democratic principles and promotion of civilian governance, but ultimately backed his program of Islamization to get rid of Bhutto’s socialist agendas and attempt to institutionalize Sharia. JI was also influenced by the marginalization experienced during the Ayub Khan martial period and as a result took on a leading role in the Council of Islamic Ideology. Through the Council they formulated and implemented Islamic penal reform and gained access to

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<sup>125</sup> Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, 53.

<sup>126</sup> S.V.R. Nasr, “The Rise of Sunni Militancy in Pakistan: The Changing Role of Islamism and the Ulama in Society and Politics,” *Modern Asian Studies* 34, no. 1 (February 2000), 142–145.

<sup>127</sup> Khan, Dr. Rashid Ahmed, “FATA after Independence: 1947–2001,” 42.

senior military officials, which became most evident during the Afghan *jihad* where the access to the military mobilized their resources to take on a leading role as liaison with the militants. There was mutual manipulation between the military and JI that would continue throughout the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, but a split would surface as Zia's regime remained distant from JI's original political vision of a civilian ruled Islamic state and treated them as a political tool for support when convenient.<sup>128</sup>

JUI and the Deobandis would have much more limited interaction directly with the Zia regime, but would establish their ideological dominance in the madrassas that proliferated in the frontier during the Afghan *jihad*. The growth in the number of madrassas decreased the quality of the education and altered the face of Deobandism in the frontier by promoting a "freelance, franchise model" that empowered less educated mullahs.<sup>129</sup> The *jihad* allowed these *mullahs* to function as political mobilizers that usurped the influence of tribal elders and the already nominal control of the political agents in the FATA and government officials in the NWFP. The *mullahs* gaining prominence during the *jihad* harkens back to the British Raj, but the decentralization and simplification of the new *mullahs* role marks a stark difference in the scope of Islamist ambitions. JUI activity in supporting this cultural shift marked a beginning to the problems experienced in the FATA today. Mariam Abou Zahab called the emergence of *jihad* by the new splinter, violent radical groups from the larger religious political movements the "privatization" of *jihad*.<sup>130</sup> This trend is best described by the Pakistani sponsorship of the Peshawar Seven and their role in facilitating *jihad* for the mujahideen.

### **3. The Peshewar Seven and the Arab Afghans**

Zia instructed the ISI to reduce the over 50 Afghan Islamist groups that had established themselves in and around Peshawar to receive funding in support of their *jihad* to a smaller number in order to streamline the distribution of weapons and money.

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<sup>128</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*, 30.

<sup>129</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*, 31.

<sup>130</sup> Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 26.

The ISI identified seven groups to receive a majority of the support and these groups competed for their share based on successful operations against the Soviets. Personal ambitions for power and ethno-linguistic rivalries as these groups vied for influence would shape the nature of the Afghan resistance from Pakistan as much as any united Islamist ideology.<sup>131</sup> The role of JI and JUI in acting as liaisons between the ISI and certain groups of the Peshawar Seven would serve as a model later for many of the militant wings of Islamist groups conducting sectarian violence inside Pakistan and terrorist acts in Kashmir. Three of the Seven Peshawar groups demand further description for their influence on the Frontier in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal.

The Hizb-i-Islami (party of Islam) group led by Gulbadin Hekmatyar received the most resources from the ISI through the overt support provided by JI during the course of the Soviet occupation and initial years of the civil war. The ISI funneled much of the hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of new and more lethal supplies originating from the U.S. and Saudi Arabia to Hekmatyar.<sup>132</sup> Hekmatyar's group became Pakistan's choice to install a Pakistan friendly and Pashtun led government in Kabul due to his Islamist ideology following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. Hizb-i-Islami (Hekmatyar) used Pakistani and Afghan Pashtuns from the frontier in his attempts over the next four years to defeat the other warlords fighting to gain control of Kabul. Pakistan eventually ran out of patience with Hekmatyar's progress and shift allegiance to the Taliban under Benazir Bhutto's watch.

The Hizb-i-Islami splinter faction led by Yunus Khalis and the Harakat-i-Inqilab-i-Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) led by Nabi Muhammadi were extremely significant due to their links to JUI and their base of power as predominantly Pashtun *mullahs*. Both groups were more traditionalist in their emphasis on adherence to Sharia blended with Pashtun custom than JUI would have preferred, but that was better than the Soviet alternative. They operated primarily in the Afghan provinces along the Durand Line from their forward guerrilla bases tucked into the inhospitable mountainous terrain

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<sup>131</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 103.

<sup>132</sup> Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 119.

of the FATA within Pakistani territory.<sup>133</sup> These two groups recruited heavily from the madrassas in the FATA that were full of young Pashtun males from the southern and eastern provinces of Afghanistan. These Afghan Pashtuns eventually combined with many of their Pakistani cousins to form the core of the Taliban in 1994. Notably, Mullah Omar, the Afghan Taliban leader, and Jalaluddin Haqqani, whose network causes much of the resistance to the U.S. presence in eastern Afghanistan today, fought with the Khalis faction during the *jihad* against the Soviets.

A significant factor that fundamentally altered the cultural landscape of the FATA that originated during Zia's Islamization agenda and the Soviet *jihad* was the introduction of thousands of Arab Islamists into Pakistan's frontier beginning around 1983. Saudi Arabia and the ISI with approval of the CIA began transferring Islamic volunteers to help with the *jihad* under the operational control Abdullah Azzam, a Palestinian Muslim Brother who taught at the Abdul Aziz University at Jedda.<sup>134</sup> The total number of Arab volunteers and extent of their participation in the actual fighting is somewhat in question, but as many as 30,000 jihadists were indoctrinated to some degree in a broader appreciation of Islamist thought as well as receiving military training in camps based in or very close to the FATA. Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda formed out of Azzam's Maktab ul-Khadamat (Services Office) and took their version of *jihad* global in the 1990s, but the network that enabled their existence and provided their safe haven after 2001 took shape under Zia's regime.<sup>135</sup>

#### **4. Zia's Legacy**

The Pakistani Pashtun that received guerrilla training and rudimentary Islamist education focusing on *jihad* in the FATA during the Soviet invasion would seek to find new employment in Afghanistan and Kashmir after the Soviet withdrawal. Although Zia was killed before the ISI and Pakistani Army began guiding these radicals to foment violence in Kashmir and southern and eastern Afghanistan, his stamp was firmly sealed

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<sup>133</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 104–108.

<sup>134</sup> Zahab and Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, 14–15.

<sup>135</sup> Zahab and Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, 15–18.

on what would become of the frontier. During Zia's regime, military involvement in Pakistani politics and government became institutionalized and the state's consistent use of their new asymmetric tools became embedded in Pakistani foreign policy as a result, even if they would not admit it. Until recently, the central motivation for not integrating the FATA was its use in deflecting accountability from the Pakistani state in sponsoring militancy and terrorism.

Zia's legacy is one of the creation of *jihadi* organizations centered in or near the FATA that have caused greater instability in the region and world as a whole as well as propelling religion to a greater extent into Pakistani domestic politics. The close collaboration of the Afghan and Pakistani Islamist groups resulted in a network of personal and institutional connections that transcended the geographic boundaries of the frontier. The Soviet jihad was bolstered by thousands of JUI and JI sponsored Pashtun, Pakistani Islamist that fought beside their Afghan counterparts following military and religious training in one of the hundreds of madrassas in the frontier. The state sponsorship of these militant Islamic camps led many followers to espouse a radical pan-Islamic agenda based on a Salafi-Wahhabi interpretation of Islam that was at odds with traditional Pashtun culture.<sup>136</sup> The Taliban would seek to merge the two, at least initially.

#### **D. THE TALIBAN AS A TOOL**

Following Zia's death, the military establishment successfully retained its control of Pakistan's national security agenda and foreign policy. Their goals of gaining "strategic depth", supporting secessionist movements in India, and gaining access to economic opportunities in Central Asia all involved using the FATA in the exact opposite way from how the British used the terrain.<sup>137</sup> Instead of closing the door to the west, they wanted to open it to expand Pakistani influence toward Central Asia and add breadth to their militant training camps. Nuclear deterrence against India and U.S. abandonment following the Cold War drove Pakistan increasingly down the path of supporting radical

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<sup>136</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 122–123.

<sup>137</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 172.

Islamists as their asymmetric method to achieving these goals.<sup>138</sup> Numerous militant splinter groups from the political arms of JI and JUI conducted terrorist operations internally directed at the Shia and in Kashmir against Indian interests, but the Taliban emerged as the tool of choice in expanding Pakistani influence in the west. Integrating the FATA would have been detrimental to these goals by placing culpability on the central government in allowing sanctuary to the Islamist militants. In the midst of domestic political turmoil, the military and ISI continued to covertly aid the militants while intentionally avoiding any change to the status of the FATA following the Soviet withdrawal.

### **1. Pakistan's Power Struggle**

Following Zia's death and the Soviet withdrawal, Pakistan's policy toward Afghanistan altered very little. Pakistan, with U.S. consent, desired the complete removal of Soviet influence in Afghanistan and to replace the regime in Kabul with Islamist forces loyal to Islamabad. The Pakistani military manipulated the elections in 1988 and 1990 in order to retain their grip on foreign policy by not allowing the PPP to win a majority and insisting that the weak "elected" government have military representation in the cabinet.<sup>139</sup> This allowed the military to retain control of Pakistan's national security agenda and direct the *jihad* toward its old nemesis, India, in Kashmir, the Shia domestically, and to continue its support, through JI, for Gulbuddin Hekmaytar and his Islamist agenda in Afghanistan.

The outbreak of the insurgency in Kashmir in December of 1989 would test Pakistan's fledgling democracy under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Bhutto and the military had a mutual distrust, but she responded to rising anti-Indian sentiment in Pakistan and allowed troop mobilizations along with ratcheting up her inflammatory rhetoric for two main reasons. First, by supporting the insurgents, Pakistan could cause substantial material costs to India while suffering few costs themselves. Additionally,

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<sup>138</sup> Significantly, President Bush cut off assistance by invoking the Pressler amendment in the wake of the Kashmir crisis in 1990 in response to Pakistan's nuclear program.

<sup>139</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 135–138.



Pakistan's incipient nuclear capability had "neutralized whatever conventional military advantages India possessed."<sup>140</sup> Indian Prime Minister, V.P. Singh, escalated the "war of words" in response to Bhutto's assertion that Pakistan was ready to fight a thousand-year war against India by deriding, "that it remained to be seen if Pakistan could last even a thousand hours."<sup>141</sup> The heightened nuclear shadow drove U.S. diplomats back into South Asia to quell the rising tensions of a nuclear showdown despite their desire to retrench in lieu of the Soviet decline. Then deputy National Security Advisor, Robert Gates visited both countries to organize a stand down in mobilization and notably told Pakistan that in all U.S. war-games concerning an Indo-Pakistani conflict, Pakistan had lost.<sup>142</sup> The statement and realization of Indian military superiority, if not admitted, reinvigorated Pakistan's goal of having a loyal government in Afghanistan to give them "strategic depth" in a conflict with India. A loyal government in Afghanistan would have to be Pashtun and leveraged through tribal links in the FATA. When the Afghan government lost its Soviet backing, Pakistan sought to wrestle victory from the turmoil that resulted.

Due to the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991 and subsequent termination of Soviet assistance to the pro-communist Najibullah regime in Kabul, Afghanistan quickly deteriorated into a civil war along ethnic and tribal lines as the Tajik northern forces seized control of the capitol. At the same time, Pakistan was facing four simultaneous conflicts that would contribute to their support of the Taliban. First, many of the Pakistani mujahideen that were fighting the Soviets transitioned to the insurgency in Kashmir against the Indian government over the disputed territory. Much of their training was conducted in the FATA to push accountability for their terrorist tactics away from Islamabad. Second, sectarian violence was on the rise throughout the 1990s between Shia and Sunni groups within Pakistan as a result of the struggle for influence in domestic politics. Third, Pakistan's domestic leadership was in a constant state of flux as the military and civilians struggled to work through the damage to what democracy

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<sup>140</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 92.

<sup>141</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 92.

<sup>142</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 94.

remained in the wake of the Zia regime. Finally, and most importantly to the FATA, the Pakistani military and ISI were growing increasingly impatient with Hekmaytar's progress in advancing the Pashtun, pro-Pakistani Islamist agenda toward winning the civil war in Afghanistan.<sup>143</sup>

When Pakistan's sputtering democracy "shuddered through another minor miracle" with a "semi-legitimate national election" and Benazir Bhutto returned to office in 1993, JUI had aligned itself with the winning party and thus gained influence within the ruling coalition.<sup>144</sup> Bhutto's Interior Ministry, led by Naseerullah Babar was looking for a new Pashtun group to revitalize the Pashtun movement to control Afghanistan as they saw the Tajiks as too friendly to India. JUI was able to lobby to take control of the fight in Afghanistan through their access to the government and to succeed through their network of madrassa students that had grown and been indoctrinated with Islamist ideology and the glory of *jihad* during resistance to the Soviets.<sup>145</sup> Benazir Bhutto was happy to support a fresh group in an attempt to gain some control of the country's foreign policy by backing the organization that would become the Taliban. At the time, Pakistan was not even discussing integration of the FATA and their actions in supporting the Taliban pushed the FATA further from integration by ultimately strengthening the nexus of Pashtuns on either side of the Durand Line. These connections would set the conditions for sanctuary following the U.S. and NATO invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

## **2. The Taliban**

The breakaway faction of JUI led by Samiul Haq became a key conduit in mobilizing the Taliban due to his Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania mosque in the NWFP as a major training ground for the Taliban leadership. The Haqqannia madrassa instilled an individual Deobandi simplicity with a Wahhabi disdain for music and decoration to produce a student that projected his goal of eliminating any intrusions from modernity on

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<sup>143</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, 223–238.

<sup>144</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, 289.

<sup>145</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale Nota Bene, 2001), 90.

a pious Muslim life onto others.<sup>146</sup> Many of the students at this madrassa were exiled Pashtuns from Kandahar including Mohammed Omar. Mullah Omar and many of those that would become Taliban had become frustrated with infighting among the Pashtun warlords and a complete lack of justice and security in southern and eastern Afghanistan. In 1994, Pakistan gave them their opportunity to fix the situation and more importantly work toward expanding Pakistan's influence throughout Afghanistan.

The Taliban's quick and violent actions in gaining control of Afghanistan have been well documented and will not be reviewed here, but the important failing of their regime was the lack of a vision for a functioning Islamic state. The Taliban were much more interested in enforcing beard growth, prayer times, dress codes, and the elimination of music and film than governing the country. The hardest working ministry by far was the Religious Police. The Taliban brought reform without a base in Islamic or Afghan history and virtually lacking knowledge of the theological and political developments in the Muslim world in the twentieth century. They took power without providing a written guideline for alternative government other than dictating lengthy lists of what cannot or must be done as a good Muslim.<sup>147</sup> A closer look at the Taliban fighter will better explain how the initial success of the Taliban has influenced the FATA today and began the Talibanization of the FATA in the early and mid-1990s.

A majority of the Taliban were Afghan and Pakistani Pashtuns who grew up, studied, trained, and fought together during the *jihad* against the Soviets for over 10 years. The typical Taliban fighter was between the age of 17 and 24 and was raised in a refugee camp close to the Pakistan border only knowing Afghanistan as a country at war with itself or an occupying foreign force. Ahmad Rashid contrasts the Mujahideen of the 1980s with the Taliban by describing the former as "men who could recount their tribal and clan lineages, remembered their abandoned farms and valleys with nostalgia and recounted legends and stories from Afghan history" whereas the latter were a group of boys that "had no memories of their tribes, their elders, their neighbors nor the complex

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<sup>146</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, 284.

<sup>147</sup> Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, 93.

ethnic mix of peoples that often made up their villages and their homeland.”<sup>148</sup> Even if the leaders of the Taliban in Kabul and Kandahar understood the nature of the tribes and ethnic groups of Afghanistan, their message could not help being lost in the implementation of their foot soldiers. Additionally, the Arab Afghans would remain involved with the struggle for an Islamist state. Mullah Omar’s decision to host Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda would complicate matters for the Taliban as they sought international recognition and local supremacy.

Pakistan portrayed the Taliban as a “continuation in the genre of the Islamic revivalist movements” of the frontier and as “successors” to the “uprisings of the Faqir of Ipi, Hadda Mullah, Mullah Powindah and other Pashtun tribal and religious figures against the British.”<sup>149</sup> The difference was they were organized and supported by external forces and conquered terrain outside their tribal support bases while accommodating an organization with a global agenda. Taliban success in the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan proved to be a façade of Islamist Revolutionary success that was not allowed to collapse on its own due to foreign intervention in the wake of Al Qaeda attacking the far enemy on September 11, 2001. The resulting invasion of U.S. and NATO forces caused the Afghan Taliban leadership, Al Qaeda central, and other foreign fighters to flee into Pakistan’s western frontier. The culture of jihad and radical Islamist ideology that permeated the frontier for the past 20 years, led the Pakistani Pashtun to grant these and other refugees sanctuary in the FATA.

Despite supporting the Taliban’s rise to power in Afghanistan, Pakistan never insisted that the Taliban finally recognize the Durand Line as the international boundary.<sup>150</sup> If Pakistan wanted to integrate the FATA, their ability to use Afghanistan to support their asymmetric militant training camps provided the opportunity to solidify the border and focus on their internal stability. Instead, Pakistan chose not to pursue this course of action and left the FATA semiautonomous due to an increasingly independent

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<sup>148</sup> Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, 32.

<sup>149</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 186.

<sup>150</sup> Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 267.

Taliban regime. Once again, Pakistan's desire to covertly influence the Durand Line and retain Islamist militants to use against India guided their actions in reinforcing the autonomy of the tribes in the FATA.

## **E. SUMMARY**

Pakistan is a relatively new country that has never been left alone to straighten out its own house due to constant conflict with its neighbors. There are no innocent countries involved in South Asia as an enduring security dilemma has placed the region in six wars, numerous skirmishes and subject to countless acts of violence since Partition. The shadow of a dominant India in the east shapes every aspect of Pakistan's calculus with regard to foreign policy and has heavy influence with most domestic decisions as well. Afghanistan would seem to be a likely ally as a fellow Muslim state, but the division of the Pashtun by the Durand Line has created a constant feud over the western border as well. The FATA has never been integrated into the state and has been left semi-autonomous because the ground and the people's loyalty have been subject to the immediate need of Pakistan's perceived national interests instead of the long-term health of domestic stability and social improvement.

Jinnah and the post-Partition governments merely wanted loyalty from the tribes of the FATA and resistance to the idea of Pashtunistan being pushed from Afghanistan so they could attempt to form a nation. Early administrations achieved this by continued payment of allowances and leaving the Pashtun to their traditions. Zulfikar Bhutto failed to act when integration of the FATA might have been possible due to competing interests for loyalty from the tribes in response to renewed Afghan claims to Pashtun territory. His initial push to improve the social and economic situation through the PPP's socialist agenda ran counter to the traditional power structure and was derailed by resistance from Balochistan and the NWFP. Zia intentionally turned the FATA into an Islamist militant training ground to garner monetary and military support from allies to secure his regime and the military's place in Pakistani politics. Integrating the FATA was never even an option under Zia as the idea of strategic depth developed and was contingent on pushing responsibility for any asymmetric threats away from the central government. The U.S.

supported Zia in this endeavor due to a laser focus on the forest of the Cold War, but missed the fact that the trees were being corrupted against the West. The mujahideen that were “dubbed by the Reagan administration as individuals sharing American values and aspirations” were realized too late to be “fundamentalist and anti-Western” in the early 1990s.<sup>151</sup> The Soviet withdrawal provided the opportunity to use the Islamist militants that trained in the FATA against India and to secure a pliable government in Afghanistan. Therefore, the post-Zia era leaders again chose to use the semiautonomous status of the FATA to generate increased pressure on India in Kashmir and support the Taliban while attempting push blame away from the central government. The effects of two decades of active neglect shaped the FATA into the center of radical Islamic militancy that we see today after the Taliban was squeezed into the FATA by the events following September 11.

The significance of Islamist militancy as Pakistan’s tool to achieve its strategic goals vis-à-vis India and Afghanistan cannot be understated in its impact on the FATA. The relatively effective control that the military and ISI had over the violence of the militants under Zia and during the 1990s has recently disappeared due to a weak central government and influence from foreign Islamists. The effects of this loss of control are addressed in the next chapter, but Pakistan’s willing use of the militants they created to achieve “plausible deniability” in Kashmir and Afghanistan served to change the power structure in the FATA fundamentally.<sup>152</sup> The leaders of the mujahideen and then the Taliban began the process of replacing the *khans* and *maliks* and even the Political Agents in the FATA with the *mullahs* that had become the military commanders and had “acquired tools in terms of weaponry, manpower, and external patrons” to challenge power locally.<sup>153</sup> Pakistan now faces an insurgency based in the FATA organized by these new ideologically driven power brokers and must decide what to do against an existential threat. The concluding chapter attempts to answer this question.

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<sup>151</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 152.

<sup>152</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 185.

<sup>153</sup> Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan*, 168.

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## **V. CONCLUSION**

The previous chapters described why no government ever tried to integrate the FATA and how they chose to influence the region with regard to their national interests. In order to explain why and briefly how the FATA must be integrated wholly into Pakistan, the concluding chapter first summarizes British and Pakistani policy in choosing not to integrate the FATA and identifies two trends that are applicable in any future attempt to do so. Then it explains how Talibanization of the frontier occurred following September 11 and describes the geopolitical context in which Pakistan now must view the FATA. Within this context, Talibanization of the FATA is explained to define the new social structure present throughout the frontier. After developing an understanding of the new structure, favorable conditions to help affect integration emerge after control and reasonable security are established in the FATA. If Pakistan continues to acknowledge the need for stability and social improvement on their western border, these conditions can be leveraged toward successful integration of the FATA into the complete writ of the central government with sustained political will domestically and continued international support diplomatically and monetarily.

### **A. SUMMARY OF BRITISH AND PAKISTANI POLICY TOWARD THE FATA**

Britain and Pakistan chose not to integrate the FATA into the government of lands they controlled due to national interests of higher priority. Britain maintained enough presence west of the Indus River and retained contingent access through strategic passes in order to present the Durand Line as a buffer from Russian encroachment into Central Asia. The Russians never pushed far enough south during British rule to cause them to need to occupy and more fully control the tribes in the FATA, so they did not. Britain faced numerous violent uprisings in the tribal areas, but they never threatened the vital interests in greater British India. Islamist militancy was tolerated due to its sporadic manifestations and the ease with which it could be disrupted. Following Partition, Pakistan left the Pashtun to their traditions and offered continued subsidies while



consumed with tensions against India over the contested areas of Kashmir and East Pakistan. Pakistan's meager attempts to improve and potentially integrate the FATA were curtailed by domestic politics in the 1970s. The Pakistani Government prior to the Soviet invasion faced less violence than the British from the FATA as domestic violence in the Punjab and Sindh as well as three wars with India were of a greater concern. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought the U.S. and foreign Islamist groups to fight the spread of communism and jihad through the Pashtun tribes along the Durand Line. U.S. and Saudi money supported the Zia regime and his efforts to Islamize Pakistan and strengthen the military while supporting and growing Islamist militancy in the frontier. The networks of Pakistani and Afghan Pashtun in the FATA fighting with the mujahideen during the 1980s carried over to form the backbone of the Taliban with direct support from Pakistan's government and military. The continued use of the FATA to protect and train Islamist militants throughout the 1990s and 2000s in order to support Pakistan's national security interests presents a reality whereby Pakistan has actually pushed the FATA further away from integration in the past 33 years.

Two themes come out of the case studies that may help answer the question of how to integrate the FATA should this course of action finally be attempted. First, the tribes desire to be equally and proportionally represented when decisions about their land and money are concerned. A limited ability to leverage tribal dynamics and a lack of will to promote this integration are what have been lacking in the past. The jirga system is a democratic process in its own right showing that the concept of voting on decisions is something very familiar to the Pashtun within their traditional consensus building process. Leveraging these tendencies already in practice can get the tribes involved in integrated governance if acceptable security is first established. Second, the tribes understand economics. They have either been paid off or extracted what they wanted from soft targets throughout their history. If the domestic will and international funding to truly improve the socioeconomic situation in the frontier is committed then there is no reason to believe the tribes cannot be convinced to receive the improvements with the right approach.

Arguments saying that the Pashtun are too independent to be governed, based on the fact that no one ever ruled them before, ignore the fact that no one has ever really tried to do so. Nuri calls the “fiercely independent” argument a “red herring” that seeks to “overestimate their strength, indulge in historical determinism and (use) it as an alibi to shirk national responsibilities.”<sup>154</sup> Shahid Burki asserts that “history is no longer a very effective guide for defining Pakistan’s *raison d’être*” and the same can be said for Pakistan’s approach to the FATA.<sup>155</sup> The turmoil of the last 30 years of war in Afghanistan and the radical Islamism that has infected the region as a result demand that the distribution of political power and participation in political decision-making be addressed in order to move Pakistan toward integrating the FATA.

Before addressing a strategy for integration, a discussion of the current status of the FATA is necessary. The next section describes how Talibanization occurred following September 11 and changed the social structure to a degree that is now favorable for Pakistani intervention. The coercive control established by the Islamist militants has now alienated the population and can be leveraged by the Pakistani government to facilitate integration of the FATA if political will and pragmatic diplomacy are the course of action that Pakistan finally chooses. Talibanization of the FATA has created the need and opportunity for Pakistan to make the first attempt at integrating the FATA successful.

## **B. TALIBANIZATION OF THE FATA**

Following September 11, 2001, the social and economic structure of the FATA changed from benefitting from their autonomous status through the weapons, drugs, and money flowing back and forth across the border with Afghanistan to an occupation by a “multilayered terrorist cake” that continued to provide profit, but demanded new rules.<sup>156</sup> The FATA became “terrorism central” as the Afghan Taliban, Islamist militants from Central Asia, Chechnya, Africa, China, and Kashmir, as well as AQ and Bin Laden

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<sup>154</sup> Nuri, “Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA): Pakistan’s Post-9/11,” 65.

<sup>155</sup> Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, 223.

<sup>156</sup> Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 265.

moved first into South Waziristan and then expanded. Jalaluddin Haqqani expedited sanctuary in the southern frontier for this myriad of Islamist militants as the Pakistani military left this portion of the frontier open by concentrating their forces in the northern agencies of Khyber and Kurram.<sup>157</sup> David Kilcullen describes this “infection” as “both AQ and the Taliban, as well as AQ-allied foreign fighters” burrowing “deeply into tribal society, through activities such as intermarriage with local tribes, co-opting of local leaders, purchase and operation of businesses and other services, charity activities, sponsorship or partnership with madrassas, and settling local disputes.”<sup>158</sup> The conditions were set for this assimilation during the 1980s and 1990s, but a stark contrast quickly developed as the Islamist militants were condemned from both east and west as Pakistan was forced to side with the United States following September 11.

Thomas Johnson notes that “in pursuit of domestic stability and its foreign policy interests in Afghanistan, Pakistan has deliberately deconstructed much of the 1,000-year-old tribal order” in the FATA. He goes on to say that “while the decline of traditional tribal governance in the short run helped recruit many mujahideen, it also led to the radicalization of the tribal areas and the opening of the FATA to jihadist movements and radicals such as bin Laden.”<sup>159</sup> The TTP formed from the local Pashtun radicals that had been influenced by the success of the Taliban and AQ. When General Musharraf determined that the U.S. would “react like a wounded bear and attack Afghanistan,” he was begrudgingly forced to “unequivocally accept all U.S. demands” and publicly support the U.S. in their war on terror.<sup>160</sup> These actions enabled the TTP to eventually condemn the Pakistani government as an apostate regime and opened up Pakistan to attacks from their new homegrown insurgency.

The TTP has changed the social structure of the FATA by dismantling traditional tribal power structures and conducting violent coercive actions that have alienated a majority of the population by undermining most of what the average Pashtun enjoyed

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<sup>157</sup> Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 265, 268.

<sup>158</sup> David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 235.

<sup>159</sup> Johnson and Mason, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire,” 71.

<sup>160</sup> Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 27–28.

about their autonomous status. The TTP utilizes suicide bombings, political assassinations, public beheadings, the stoning to death of unveiled women, publicly displayed mutilated bodies, and a continuous explosive assault on girls' schools to promote fear in the people of the FATA, the NWFP, and Pakistan in general. Between 2003 and 2008, TTP's attacks resulted in over 1,200 Pakistani soldiers killed and more than 6,000 tribal men and women from the FATA and NWFP dead. TTP violence also impacts outside the FATA and NWFP as demonstrated by the assassination of a former Pakistani prime minister in Rawalpindi as well as bombings in the capital of Islamabad and Karachi.<sup>161</sup> In 2007, the TTP attacked the military directly with 36 of their 56 suicide bombings aimed at military targets, but has increasingly attacked more indiscriminately against softer civilian targets.<sup>162</sup> The number of attacks is on the rise in the two years since and escalated dramatically throughout 2009.

The origins of TTP are linked to the Pakistani military's attempt to eliminate foreign fighters from the FATA in response to pressure from the United States from 2002 to 2004. The Pashtun tribes in North and South Waziristan, specifically, were accustomed to relative autonomy due to the lack of governance historically absent in the FATA. TTP began as numerous small, militant tribal groups reacting to government incursion by coordinating and using militant attacks against and at other times negotiating settlements with Pakistani military forces. The former Afghan Taliban sympathizers, and some members, formed a distinct identity that gave nominal allegiance to the Afghan Taliban leader, Mullah Omar. However, TTP created their own political space in the FATA and acted, often against Omar's guidance, independently in Pakistan.<sup>163</sup>

The tribes in South Waziristan that became the foundation for the TTP fought their way to a peace deal with the military in April 2004 under the leadership of Nek Mohammed Wazir. The negotiated peace settlement included a promise from the tribesman to handover foreign Islamic extremists associated with AQ as well as,

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<sup>161</sup> Syed Manzar Zaidi, "A Profile of Baitullah Mehsud," *The Long War Journal* (2008). <http://www.longwarjournal.org/pakistan-project.php> (accessed 23 May 2009), 2.

<sup>162</sup> Hassan Abbas, "A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan," *CTC Sentinel* 1, Iss. 2 (January 2008), 3.

<sup>163</sup> Abbas, "A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan," 1.

astonishingly, money from the Pakistani government to pay debts the Waziris owed AQ. When the military withdrew pressure from South Waziristan and Nek Mohammed had his money, the group began to show its true intentions by immediately reneging on the agreement and expanding the territory under their control north toward the NWFP. Nek Mohammed was killed by a hellfire strike in June of 2004 and Baitullah Mehsud took over as his successor at the age of 35.<sup>164</sup>

On February 7, 2005, the Pakistani government signed a peace agreement with Baitullah requiring his pledge not to harbor AQ or attack government forces. The agreement ultimately served to raise Baitullah's stature among his tribe and allowed time and space to broaden and strengthen his forces in the region. Baitullah's credentials were solidified on Aug 30, 2007, when he captured over 240 Pakistani soldiers and held them hostage in Waziristan until he could negotiate a prisoner exchange for 25 trained suicide bombers in government custody. In December of 2007, Baitullah was chosen to unify Taliban operations in Pakistan under the TTP by a 40-member Taliban *shura* that consisted of representation from all seven agencies of the FATA and most of the NWFP.<sup>165</sup> The TTP had established itself as an alternative to the traditional tribal leadership of the FATA with support from the Afghan Taliban and the murder of over 150 tribal elders for the "charges" of being Pakistani and American spies.<sup>166</sup> Significantly, in order to retain power, the number of tribal elders murdered is now over 300.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> David Montero, "Pakistan: State of Emergency," *Frontline* Documentary (February 26, 2008). <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/video/flv/generic.html?s=frow03pb7&continuous=1> (accessed May 24, 2009). Age 35 is very young for any position of importance in the Pashtun tribal culture.

<sup>165</sup> Zaidi, "A Profile of Baitullah Mehsud," 6–7.

<sup>166</sup> Abbas, "A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan," 2.

<sup>167</sup> Ahmed Rashid. "Pakistan's Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy." *CTC Sentinel* 2, Iss. 3 (March 2009), 9.

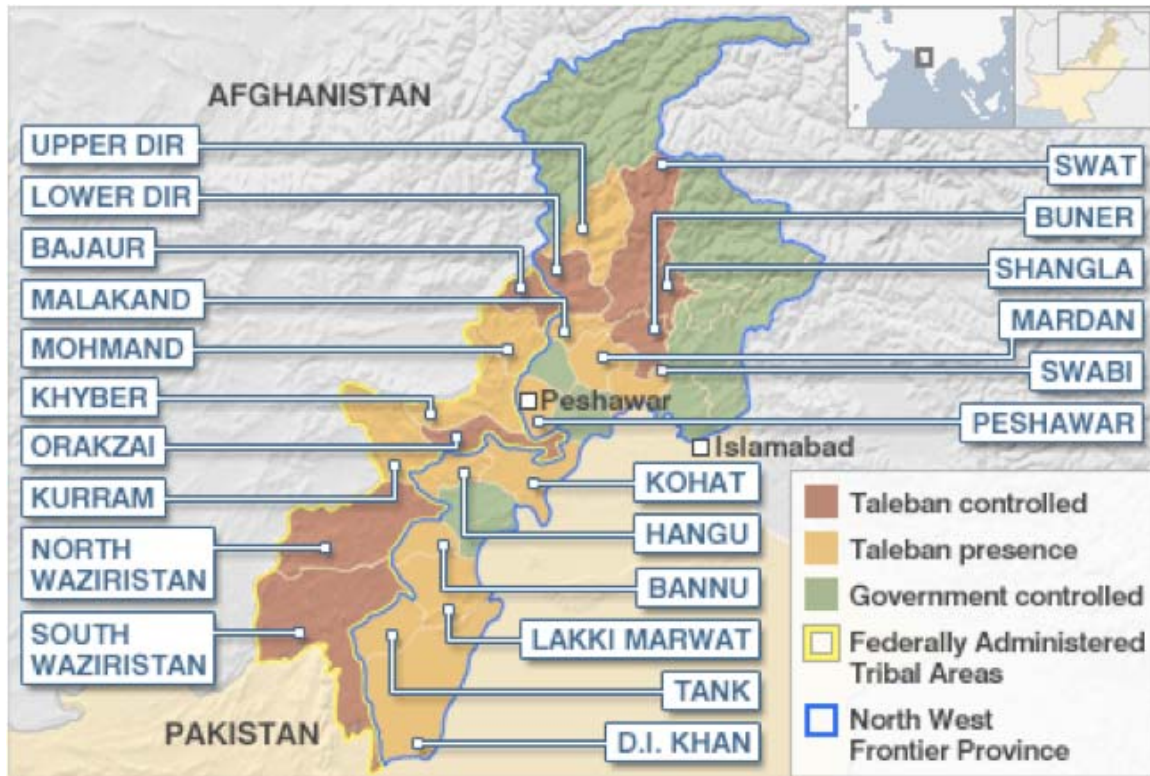


Figure 5. Map of TTP controlled area as of May 2009.

Despite some of the public comments of dissent between the Afghan Taliban and TTP, there exists a strong nexus of support between all the Islamist militants in the FATA at the local level. Many current TTP and Afghan Taliban insurgents attended the same madrassas built and sponsored by predominantly Saudi Arabian Wahhabi Muslim donors. Additionally, Pakistani Pashtuns from the FATA frequently ventured into Afghanistan to help the Taliban enforce Sharia during their reign. These relationships built in the late 1990s were sustained and maintained throughout the removal of the Taliban from Afghanistan. TTP still conducts limited operations across the border in Afghanistan as well as facilitating movement of men and material through the FATA, but over the past two years have turned their attention increasingly toward Pakistan.

Baitullah Mehsud took a *baya'h* to Mullah Omar, but that did not stop Omar from condemning the TTP's actions and reaffirming the Afghan Taliban's priorities in early

2008.<sup>168</sup> Mullah Omar's spokesman stated they have no concern for the membership of "the Taliban movement in Pakistan" and that theirs (the Afghan Taliban) "is an Afghan movement and we, as a matter of policy, do not support militant activity in Pakistan."<sup>169</sup> These public statements point to a distinct rift in the actions and goals of the Pakistani Taliban movement from the original. The TTP's terrorist attacks inside Pakistan are seen as an incorrect application of *jihad* that could be better used as part of the Afghan Taliban's insurgency efforts. AQ does not see TTP actions this way. Starting with Baitullah, TTP leadership has chosen to align themselves more with AQ in having a "transnational outlook and clear ideological reasons for rejecting the legitimacy of the Pakistani state."<sup>170</sup>

When AQ was forced to flee Afghanistan and settle in South Waziristan, they immediately became a source of revenue to the Pakistani Taliban as they purchased security and space by freely distributing money to the local tribes. The Islamist radicals in the FATA are now "making money in the mayhem" through their control of the transportation mafia, weapons and drug smuggling, as well as sponsorship from AQ and other sympathizing donors.<sup>171</sup> AQ bought a substantial amount of loyalty by paying generally 15 times more than the traditional price for goods and services and in one case renting a compound for \$10,000 that usually rented for \$17 to \$20.<sup>172</sup> Osama Bin Laden also had connections in the FATA from the late 1990's and AQ leadership worked quickly to reestablish and build new relationships within the Pakistani Taliban.

Two exceptionally important connections developed between AQ and the TTP. Baitullah Mehsud learned how to fight from Jalaluddin Haqqani. Haqqani knew Bin

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<sup>168</sup> A *baya'h* is an oath of allegiance that normally obligates the oath taker to follow the orders of the leader.

<sup>169</sup> "Baitullah is on his own, say Afghan Taliban," *Dawn* Bureau Report (Peshawar, January 28, 2008). <http://www.dawn.com/2008/01/29/top18.htm> (accessed May 29, 2009).

<sup>170</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamist Frontier*, 86.

<sup>171</sup> Arabinda Acharya, Syed Adnan Bukhari, and Sadia Sulaiman, "Making Money in the Mayhem: Funding Taliban Insurrection in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 1 (2009), 101–105.

<sup>172</sup> Acharya, Bukhari, Adnan and Sulaiman, "Making Money in the Mayhem: Funding Taliban Insurrection in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan," 102.

Laden from his days as a Taliban military commander north of Kabul and helped him escape from Tora Bora in early 2002.<sup>173</sup> Mehsud and Bin Laden subsequently spent time together in South Waziristan in 2002. Ayman al-Zawahiri fled from Waziristan to Bajaur Agency where he married a woman from the Mohmand tribe in the adjacent agency. The marriage allowed him to develop a strong relationship with Maulana Faqir Mohammed who is in charge of the Tehrik, Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi (TNSM) movement in Bajaur Agency.<sup>174</sup> Faqir is now number three in TTP and in charge of operations in Bajaur. AQ leverages these relationships for sanctuary and training space in the FATA. Additionally, AQ urges, finances, and supports TTP terrorist attacks against the “apostate” Pakistani regime that they see as “wreaking havoc” on Islam and are hopeful that a successful TTP secures a safe haven for AQ’s continued pursuit of transnational terrorism against the West.<sup>175</sup>

The TTP, influenced by AQ and mimicking the Taliban, have succeeded in controlling large populations within the FATA and NWFP through establishing coercive shadow governments that have alienated the people through their extreme application of violence in enforcing Sharia. These actions have replaced the traditional disequilibrium between the expectation of autonomy by the tribes and the central government’s administration of the provinces. The new disequilibrium is found between the Islamic militants goal of power at the expense of social welfare and the freedom that was so much a part of the traditional Pashtun narrative. Locally, intervention by the Pakistani government and military is now desirable based on being the lesser of two evils with regard to the FATA in light of the change in structure forced by the TTP. Sentiment within Pakistan as well as regional developments now make the time more favorable than ever to intervene and first secure and then set the conditions for sustained development

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<sup>173</sup> Zaidi, “A Profile of Baitullah Mehsud,” 4–5.

<sup>174</sup> Rohan Gunaratna and Anders Nielsen, “Al Qaeda in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan and Beyond,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31, no. 9 (2008), 779.

<sup>175</sup> Mark Stout, Jessica Huckabey, John Schindler, and Jim Lacey, *The Terrorist Perspectives Project: Strategic and Operational Views of Al Qaeda and Associated Movements* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008), 104.



and integration of the FATA. The next section describes the current geopolitical context and improving regional developments that provide at least a brief window for Pakistan to effectively concentrate on controlling and integrating the FATA.

### **C. CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT**

Pakistan must take advantage of the current regional and international focus on stabilizing the FATA in order to mitigate the threat of Islamist militancy by leveraging the diplomatic and monetary concessions to integrate the FATA in the next five years. The United States shifted its focus of effort from Iraq to Afghanistan under the Obama administration. On December 1, 2009, President Obama committed 30,000 more U.S. troops to help secure the Afghan population and accelerate training of Afghan security forces. Increased troop levels are already putting more pressure on the Taliban indirectly by expanding NATO's areas of influence in controlling the population. Current troop levels will be maintained until the summer of 2011 at which time a decrease in troop levels will begin contingent on progress in Afghanistan and political will domestically within the U.S. Pakistan must realize it has a limited window in which the Afghan Taliban, AQ, and Pakistani Taliban elements have reduced freedom of movement along the Durand Line due to Afghan and coalition force operations. This commitment is indefinite, but will probably be sufficient to pressure insurgent elements at least through 2015, which also corresponds to the significant monetary commitment contained in the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act, also known as the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Bill. The Act promises 7.5 billion over the next five years and dictates a significant portion be directed toward social and economic improvements in the FATA.

Current operations by the Pakistani military in South Waziristan, Bajaur, and the NWFP are demonstrating much more resolve than 2004 and 2006 operations, which resulted in cease fire agreements that all failed miserably.<sup>176</sup> Additionally, recent high profile captures of Afghan Taliban leadership including the second in command, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, demonstrate a willingness by Pakistani security forces to no longer

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<sup>176</sup> Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 278.

separate the Islamist militants into “good and bad Taliban.”<sup>177</sup> Pakistani actions against the Afghan Taliban are significant due to years of reacting to mostly internal militants and turning a blind eye to the Afghan Taliban despite continue pressure from Washington. During the Musharraf regime from 2001 to 2008, the government was happy to profit and remain in power through a close, yet naïve relationship with the Bush administration. Rashid stated “as long as Pakistan remained the center for Talibanization, terrorism, or nuclear proliferation, the world could not ignore the military regime or dispense with Musharraf.”<sup>178</sup> Since 2006, both insurgent attacks and suicide bombings have increased six fold throughout the country, but primarily focused in the FATA and NWFP.<sup>179</sup> These domestic attacks combined with the irredentist rhetoric of the TTP have pushed the military and civilian government closer together in their urgency to quell the growing threat of the Islamist militants. Additionally the population in the frontier and the nation, despite anti-U.S. sentiment, are no longer supportive or tolerant of the TTP due to the coercive violence used by the militants to gain control of the FATA and the indiscriminant methods used in attacking civilians and government facilities inside Pakistan.

Another recent development has the potential to allow Pakistan to focus more resources on their western border. On February 25, 2010, the Foreign Ministries of Pakistan and India reopened talks for the first time since the Mumbai attacks in 2008. Although the talks were deemed not substantive by the regional media, the fact that the two countries are back at the table is progress toward at least a brief relax in tensions following Mumbai. India’s major agenda is to urge Pakistan to combat Islamist terrorism directed at India. The high profile arrests mentioned previously occurred before the meeting and seem to demonstrate a convergence of agenda that can be leveraged by Pakistan. It is in India’s interests to not provoke any unrest on Pakistan’s eastern border

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<sup>177</sup> “Mullah Baradar’s Capture,” *Dawn* editorial, February 18, 2010. <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/16-mullah-baradars-capture-hs-02> (accessed February 27, 2010).

<sup>178</sup> Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 291.

<sup>179</sup> Ian S. Livingston and Michael O’Hanlon, “Pakistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security” (Brookings Website, January 15, 2010), 4. <http://www.brookings.edu/pakistanindex> (accessed February 6, 2010).

so that Pakistan can reduce the Islamist threat in the frontier for the security and economic benefit of the entire region. Reinvigorated diplomacy with India, increased NATO operations in Afghanistan, and monetary aid from the U.S. have given Pakistan an opportunity to act in the FATA.

The Pakistani military's lingering agenda of strategic depth is one hurdle that will be difficult to overcome. Understandably, Pakistan and India are very concerned about what happens in Afghanistan when the U.S. decides to leave. India does not want an expanded safe haven for Islamist militants and Pakistan desires to guide and influence the Afghan government as an inferior, pliable ally. Fortunately, the TTP have created a situation in the frontier that cannot be ignored for five years, while Pakistan waits for the U.S. to leave. The TTP's aggressive agenda has forced Pakistan to act. Pakistani action must now look to take advantage of the altered social structure in the FATA and persistent U.S. presence in Afghanistan in the short term to greatly diminish the threat from Islamist militants and integrate the FATA as part of the NWFP. The question is a matter of strategy in how best to proceed in this endeavor.

#### **D. WHAT MUST BE DONE**

As Pakistani military success gains momentum in the FATA, the government must take advantage of the negatively altered social structure and favorable geopolitical context in pursuing not only military success, but also complete integration of the FATA. In this endeavor, Pakistan must reverse a long history of autonomy with the realization that no government has had the opportunity and the need to integrate the FATA until now. Pakistan's recent military operations demonstrate an acknowledgement that they are fighting a counterinsurgency in the frontier. Pakistan has realized that it needs to control the population in order to eliminate the insurgency instead of selectively targeting and negotiating with the insurgents in order to influence the people. With the significant step of admitting they have a problem accomplished, Pakistan must first secure and control the FATA, then reform the status and governance of the frontier, and finally set the conditions for long term social and economic reform utilizing the significant funds promised in the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act. Integration of the FATA

completely into Pakistan logically follows the second step above, but as a practical matter will happen concurrently and not be fully realized until tangible results start to manifest themselves to the benefit of the population, which may take a couple of years.

The first step in integrating the FATA is for the military to continue to augment the Frontier Corps and *khassadars* in order to systematically gain control of political space in the FATA. Security forces must pursue four lines of operation to accomplish this mission. First, adequate security has to be developed and maintained in areas where control has been gained in order to prevent militants from reoccupying and eroding the confidence of the people. Second, the local militant leaders that have established shadow governments must be targeted to reestablish traditional local leadership and gain valuable information that enables targeting higher profile insurgents. Third, as a supporting effort, security forces should continue to target core members of the TTP, Taliban, and AQ to diminish confidence in the militants and demonstrate to the people that joining the insurgents is not in their best interest. Finally, Pakistan needs to open up access to NGO's and media organizations to keep international consensus on the side of Pakistan and help deter foreign support to militants in the FATA by highlighting success and profiling the coercive methods existing previously. All of these efforts are geared toward controlling the terrain by securing the population and the decision to act or not must be made with the second and third order effects that any kinetic or nonkinetic action will have with regard to popular preference toward the state. The bottom line is that Pakistan has to control the FATA by sustained security efforts that grow policing capabilities internally and compensate the local security forces with improved pay and training. Once a condition of acceptable security is established, with the expectation that it takes a few years in certain tribal areas, the Pashtun traditions of a democratic process and economic opportunism can be leveraged to provide a viable alternative to the Talibanization that the population now rejects.

Talibanization was only popular in so far as an individual could profit in the absence of other alternatives and due to the coercive and violent methods used to demand support. In reality, Taliban fighters "violate both Islamic and Pashtun norms" and are

deeply unpopular.<sup>180</sup> The first step in addressing the disequilibrium between the social values and expectations of the people of the FATA is integration with the state. Three steps must be taken immediately in legislation to set the conditions for action when security is established. First, Pakistan should integrate the FATA into the NWFP. The alternative of making the FATA a separate province would only continue the trend of marginalization due to the tribal areas already inferior social and economic status. Designating the FATA as part of the NWFP would allow the NWFP to gradually grow its security and governing infrastructure first to the more secure frontier regions and then west as different tribal areas are secured. Removing the semi-autonomous status will make the Province and state responsible in total for the actions and well-being of the tribal areas. Second, and closely related to the first, Pakistan must abolish the office of political agent and the FCR. Many of the political agents no longer act without support or acceptance from the militants and even when effective distribute money and justice based less on fairness and more on gaining relative influence and personal power due to a lack of oversight. The FCR is an antiquated system of justice that allows collective punishment with loose guidance on how large the collective unit is. Making the FATA's tribal areas districts within the NWFP and extending the Criminal Procedure Code can go along way toward providing oversight and tackling the corruption that is now pervasive in the FATA.<sup>181</sup> Finally, the Political Parties Act should extend to the FATA to allow the universal suffrage granted in 1997 to be fully realized at the new district level. Any fears of these parties being taken over by Islamist politics are unfounded based on the performance of the MMA from 2002 to 2008. The MMA moved toward center and moderated their rhetoric throughout their time in power in the NWFP, and was voted out in favor of secular parties as the population realized there was little improvement under the Islamist parties.<sup>182</sup> Even if traditional tribal leadership become the elected representatives based on tribal voting preferences, the Pashtun tendency toward democracy in the form of the *jirga* would now be leveraged for integration and greater

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<sup>180</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamic Frontier*, 126.

<sup>181</sup> *Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA*, 13–14.

<sup>182</sup> White, *Pakistan's Islamic Frontier*, 72. The MMA was a coalition of five Islamist religious organizations that formed a political party to win elections in the NWFP in 2002.

political participation that gives a vested interest to the tribes in the benefits that the state can offer. After legislative integration is achieved then it is up to the state to deliver the goods, fortunately Pakistan is receiving billions toward this end to jump-start the process over the next five years.

The next step in bringing the social values and expectations of the FATA closer to that of the other provinces is significant development in infrastructure, schools, and local businesses. Infrastructure is the first hurdle as roads, electricity and potable water enable follow-on efforts to grow. The new districts in the tribal areas must see immediate progress and sustainment once new infrastructure penetrates the area in order to encourage collaboration and opportunities with the provincial and national government and mitigate the perception that the development is just another opportunity for the state to exploit the international community's generosity for the gain of a few elites in Islamabad. Second, the education system in the FATA must be improved as part of a larger effort to reform the entire Pakistani education system. Stable conditions will go along way to setting the conditions for girls to attend and "ghost schools" to be opened or held accountable, nevertheless teachers should receive incentives to instruct in what must be "regarded as a hardship post."<sup>183</sup> Finally, small businesses should be encouraged with investment in local merchandise such as textiles. The Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act initially called for reconstruction opportunity zones that gave duty free access to U.S. markets. Although taken out of the final bill, there is still an opportunity to obtain tariff benefits if progress is made in securing the region.<sup>184</sup> The Pashtun understand how to make money. If legitimate opportunities to profit are presented while illicit activities are curtailed with an improved security environment, the tribes will figure out a way to take advantage of the new paradigm. The FATA will never be a cosmopolitan area, but very small, tangible steps in improving the social and economic

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<sup>183</sup> *Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA*, 16. "ghost schools" are schools where teachers often receive a paycheck, but due to a lack of oversight do not actually teach classes. Additionally the Islamized curriculum has led to claims that public education is in some places more corrosive than the curriculum taught at the madrassas.

<sup>184</sup> *Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA*, 22.

situation combined with sustained security at this point are all that is required in the short term to mitigate the unfulfilled promises of Islamist militancy.

None of the actions above are easy decisions for Pakistan to make. They involve taking on responsibility for terrain and people left to a certain extent to their own devices throughout history. Additionally, Pakistan would be attempting to reverse a strategy that served them well in contesting India and influencing Afghanistan for a relatively cheap price. The money saved in supporting Islamist militancy for the past 33 years must now be spent to defend the legitimacy of the nation. Pakistan can take solace in the fact that no government has ever failed to integrate the FATA because no government has ever tried. Leveraging Pashtun tradition against the TTP's inability to provide an alternative to integrate the FATA will disprove the myth of the impossible and bring greater security to Pakistan and the region.

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